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Near East & South Asia

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Amman television carried live the opening speeches by the Turkish, Bahraini, Omani, Qatari, Kuwaiti, Tunisian, and Saudi foreign ministers in Moscow, as well as the Egyptian foreign minister's press conference. Meanwhile, Palestinians did not participate in a committee that met on the refugee issue after the Israeli delegation objected to the inclusion of Palestinian delegates who reside outside the occupied territories, MENA reported.

Jordan

King Husayn is to undergo a "minor" operation on his right leg on 29 January at King Husayn Medical Center in Amman and will remain hospitalized for 24 hours, Amman radio disclosed. No further details were provided. King Husayn discussed Jordan's role in the Moscow talks and the problems facing Palestinians in an interview published by the Paris paper LE FIGARO.

Israel

Sixteen mobile homes being installed in the West Bank near Qedumim do not constitute a "new" settlement because the plan to erect homes on the site was approved months ago, Tel Aviv radio reported. In another development, the head of the Central Command established "standby" settler units to assist IDF troops in handling "terrorist attacks," HA'ARETZ stated. German firms are reportedly helping Iran to develop its nuclear and chemical weapon programs, a matter which Tel Aviv takes "a very serious view of," HA'ARETZ disclosed. U.S. and Israeli officials have already raised the issue with German officials, according to the paper.

Iran

A Foreign Ministry spokesman denied as "baseless" Western media reports alleging that Iran is employing nuclear experts from the former Soviet Union, Tehran radio reported.

India

The government denied having either a nuclear or chemical weapons program and asserted it had "no intention" of soliciting the services of CIS scientists, according to a spokesman for the External Affairs Ministry. His statement came in response to remarks about the country's nuclear capability attributed to CIA Director Robert Gates.

Algeria

Shots were fired in Badjarah district on 29 January during demonstrations sparked by the arrest of two imams, according to eyewitnesses cited by Algiers radio. The radio said no casualty figures were available.

Egypt

President Husni Mubarak sent two "urgent" messages to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat dealing with the multilateral talks in Moscow, MENA revealed.

Iraq

'Abd al-Husayn Rahi, a member of Iraq's Ba'th Party leadership, was executed on the orders of Saddam Husayn on 28 January, according to "informed sources" cited by Tehran radio.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Report on 'Ashrawi News Conference in Moscow

TA2801140992

[Editorial Report] Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1040 GMT on 28 January begins a live relay of a news conference by Palestinian spokesperson Hanan 'Ashrawi at the Russian Foreign Ministry in Moscow. 'Ashrawi speaks in English.

On the Palestinians' arrival in Moscow 'Ashrawi says: "We came to Moscow fully prepared to participate on an equal footing, as a Palestinian delegation representing the entirety of the Palestinian people, whether under occupation—in the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem—or in exile, all over the world, in order to have effective, comprehensive, and legitimate representation and participation. We came to Moscow having done our best to ensure the success and progress of the bilateral negotiations that started in Madrid and continued in Washington, in which the Palestinian delegation was forthcoming, was positive and constructive in all its endeavors, and we came in order to ascertain that the Palestinian people as a whole are committed to a vision of peace, not just for the Palestinians, but for the whole region and for the whole world."

'Ashrawi says that the Palestinian delegation did not come "to represent only one side of the Palestinian people while under occupation, minus East Jerusalem. We came in the fullness of our experience and national identity" to affirm our commitment "and to work in order to make a success of these multilateral negotiations. We found it very ironic that while this conference, the multilateral negotiations, was established in order to prepare a holistic vision of peace, a conference of reconciliation and cohesion that is meant to bring countries together, we found that the politics of fragmentation and exclusion were being practiced on the Palestinian people. We do not understand the rationale behind trying to bring countries together and yet divide and fragment." 'Ashrawi continues: "We don't understand why the unfair conditions that were imposed on us in Madrid in order to start or to launch bilateral negotiations would be superimposed on multilateral negotiations. We understood that the Madrid formula applied to Madrid and we accepted these conditions in order to assure the whole world that we are willing to do whatever is possible to ensure the success of Madrid and the bilateral talks. Despite the fact that in our letter of assurances we were told that no side has the right to veto the membership of any other side, that only the Palestinians have the right to choose members of their own delegation, we freely accepted to choose our delegation in Madrid not to include Palestinians from exiles. And now we found that in Moscow that Madrid is going to be repeated as a formula or as terms of reference." 'Ashrawi says the understanding was that "these conditions apply only to bilateral, that they do not apply to multilateral that deal with issues of regional status, of permanent status issues, and issues pertaining to the Palestinian people as a whole." Therefore, she says, the Palestinians presented a list of participants not only on a legal basis "but also on the basis of practicability and efficacy."

'Ashrawi asserts that Israel "is doing everything possible in order to undermine the peace process as a whole, particularly in the escalation of its policies and practices in the occupied territories, whether primarily in the form of stepped up, escalated settlement activities, expropriation of land and water and resources, and in the utterances and public discourse, refusing to accept the terms and the principles underlying real negotiations."

'Ashrawi says Israel's conduct prevented progress in the bilateral talks in Washington. "We think that when you act contrary to the spirit and the basis and the principle of peace and the whole process, then there should be accountability." One cannot give only "lip service" to peace, she says, and adds: "The Palestinians now are being told you cannot stand in the way of the peace process. On the contrary, we have done everything we can," and paid a heavy price "especially in terms of human lives and rights in order to make this process a success." The Palestinians "withstand all sorts of coercion and depression and continue in this peace process. It is not easy for us as people under occupation to come and to continue" efforts for peace when our people are dying, our houses are being torn down, and violence is "systematically being practiced against a civilian, defenseless population. I came from a town under curfew in which settlers and army regularly raid people's homes at night, people who are imprisoned in their homes because of the curfew," and children and women are beaten up. 'Ashrawi says this is a reign of terror. Mentioning the subject of deportation, 'Ashrawi says the families of the prospective deportees experience great suffering, but Israel did not accept the UN resolution on deportation and did not change the decision to deport these Palestinians.

An unidentified reporter, speaking in English, says that "as he just told us, Secretary Baker, and the Russians too, would favor expanding Palestinian participation in discussions of the refugee problem, economic issues, maybe other issues. Has this been rejected? Is it a dead issue, and if it is, why was it rejected and who rejected it?" 'Ashrawi answers: "We are evaluating and assessing this development....I was a bit late [to the news conference] because we were involved in the assessment of Secretary Baker's statement. They [Baker's proposals] were not in any way rejected or viewed negatively, but they have to be addressed further and we have to get them first hand." In answer to an indistinct question 'Ashrawi says: "Well, last night there was some slight progress, but it wasn't this compromise on the table." /Another reporter asks whether Jerusalem is still a "sticking" issue, and 'Ashrawi replies: "That's right. The issue of Jerusalem is a critical issue, because Jerusalem is not just a concrete place. It sums a whole national issue." She adds that "we, as Jerusalemites," feel this issue

should be discussed because of "our personal commitments" and because of "its universal dimension." 'Ashrawi then says: "So we continue to pursue the issue of Jerusalem and we continue to challenge the participants and their sponsors to implement that official and public policy that states that East Jerusalem is occupied territory. Nobody has accepted the illegal Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem, the unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem, except for Israel itself and I think one other country."

Delegation Heads' Speeches at Opening Session

Egypt's 'Amr Musa

JN2901081292 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1139 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Speech by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] Minister Kozyrev, Secretary James Baker, Your Excellencies the heads of delegations, ladies and gentlemen:

Allow me on this occasion to convey the greetings and appreciation of President Husni Mubarak and the Egyptian people to President Yeltsin and the friendly Russian people and to express thanks for hosting the third stage of the peace negotiations, in spite of the delicate circumstances through which the Russian homeland is passing and the difficulties affecting these strong people.

Our meeting today is a unique paradox because never before in history have parties, whose differences remain unresolved and when no peace has been established among them, sat together to explore the horizons of regional cooperation and the fields of interdependence.

Perhaps this might be one of the fruits of the new world order or an expression of optimism and hope that the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict could be resolved on the basis of land for peace, regardless of hesitation or many obstacles. Perhaps, the network of interwoven interests constitutes the real flow of the river of peace [one minute break in transmission] ...but the regional cooperation cannot represent an effective framework for peace if it is not based on law and justice which decisively urge Israel to withdraw from the territories it has occupied since 1967 and to recognize the Palestinian people's rights in return for recognizing Israel's existence and its right to live in peace within its recognized borders, according to the principles and aims of the international law.

Gentlemen, the Middle East region, after the Madrid meeting last October, witnessed a historic change, with the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict agreeing to negotiate. Despite the short time between starting the peace process in Madrid and the opening of the multilateral negotiations in Moscow, the period was full of inspiring political symbols. Looking at the bilateral negotiations in Washington, we note their slow and faltering pace and, through following up the situation in the occupied territories, we notice the continued colonization and stifling of its inhabitants' rights.

The inspiration of the bilateral negotiations and the events in the occupied territory will continue to influence strongly us today, whether positively or negatively. Perhaps Syria's absence is a clear message that lack of progress in the bilateral negotiations will bury regional cooperation projects and waste opportunities. This is a view, even a position, that has its reasons and justifications.

The Palestinian representatives are not here. We are convinced that their continued presence among us is indispensable because they, in addition to Israel, are the main party in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, the Palestinian people do not consist only of the occupied territories' inhabitants, but also branches and refugees [one minute break in transmission] ...all these have the right to represent their people if they were selected to do so. We demand reconsideration of this new, strange principle, alien to justice and fairness, that gives a certain delegation the right to veto the formation of another delegation whith whom it will negotiate.

Based on this, we welcome what U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said today. He stated that the two cosponsors agree on the participation of Palestinians from outside the occupied territories in the working groups within the multilateral negotiations. Despite all these and other problems, none of them should constitute a reason to stand idly by and take no further initiative. Acting together and interacting positively, the Arab and Israeli delegations can generate a momentum to surmount obstacles, provided that each side's political will is determined to work in the peace process and not engage in political ploys and that it should be clear that the international community will not let matters get out of hand or the process be threatened without pinpointing the party responsible.

In light of all this, everyone feels that the continued building of illegal settlements in the occupied territories and the escalating acts of violence, which are protected by the occupation authorities and call for counterviolence, endanger both the peace process and regional stability. These acts threaten the goals of these negotiations on bilateral and multilateral levels. Here, I would like to reiterate Egypt's initiative that President Mubarak announced a few months ago: Stop the settlements in the occupied Arab territories in return for an end to the Arab boycott of Israel.

Gentlemen, despite all these challenges, which should neither be exaggerated nor downplayed, we feel that there are bridges that can be crossed, pillars of cooperation that can be built, and guarantees of success on which we can agree. At the same time, we fully realize that the gap separating the various positions is wide and deep.

Our current efforts, which seek to establish regional cooperation to serve as a framework for peace—based on

the fact that peace will not be complete without such cooperation—necessitate that respect for the principles of legitimacy and justice govern the entire process. Therefore, we believe the starting point lies in Israel's withdrawal from the territories it has occupied since 1967 and in applying the Geneva Convention as long the foreign occupation continues, as well as a connection between the various parties' rights, duties, and security arrangements according to UN Resolution 242.

Gentlemen, in the context of preparing for the third phase of the multilateral talks, the EC and other peace partners submitted ideas, initiatives, and views on the future of the Middle East under the aegis of the proposed regional cooperation. This is, of course, in addition to the role of the United States, whose major participation in all phases of the peace process we have called for and will continue to call for. We in Egypt, like the other peace partners, want to agree on reasonable and acceptable concepts for such cooperation and on the foundations, regulations, and principles guiding it. It is our firm belief that regional cooperative relations basically require a new formulation of the patterns that used to exist among the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It means opening the way to regional cooperation that ensures collective or mutual benefits. Such relations must proceed from political acceptance based on goodwill.

Speaking of the principles and foundations, we note that foremost among them is equality in sovereignty among all states, respect for borders, territorial integrity, political independence, the guaranteed right to chose and develop a political and social system, and the inalienable right to self-determination.

Regarding mutual commitments that must be respected, foremost among them is adherence to the UN Charter, principles, and provisions which supersede any other commitment; adherence to the principles of the world declaration of amicable relations among states; and full implementation of international obligations and with goodwill to ensure mutual benefit and a balance of interests.

The fields of regional cooperation within the framework of a just peace are numerous. The first stage of this cooperation is to explore seriously the issue of arms limitation to create a qualitative and quantitative security balance for the region's countries in a way that guarantees the security of all parties without exception—and without privileges being given to a certain country.

We are not forgetting that we are on the threshold of peace and not aggression. The responsibility here does not lie with the regional parties alone but also with major powers outside the region who must handle the situation in a balanced and sincere manner. Arms control should be based on removing from the Middle East weapons of mass destruction, mainly nuclear weapons, including those in stockpiles. All this should be based on the implementation of international regulations that supervise these activities. Hence, all countries of the region should sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. As a first step to eliminate these weapons, the existing stockpiles must be publicly scrutinized, as required of countries preparing to enter the comprehensive peace process. Agreements must be reached on programs to destroy these weapons. If this is not done, no positive, effective progress can be made toward controlling all forms of chemical, biological, and conventional weapons. All of these, in addition to missile weaponry, must be controlled in a way that does not give an advantage to one party over another in any way.

Areas of economic cooperation are related to the region's natural resources and their development, and to traditional, new, and renewable energy resources. The discussion of economic and trade relations and environmental problems involving land, water, and sea, should be regionally integrated using agendas based on common needs and points of agreement, not points of disagreement, and on joint efforts to achieve benefits and preserve the legitimate rights.

Undoubtedly, the Middle East region is full of resources, people, and resources that, through a just peace, can give the people what cannot be achieved in the absence of peace. But agreement on all of this is conditional on Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories [one minute break in transmission] ...this unique opportunity to raise the issue of Jerusalem, which is a city governed by unanimously approved international resolutions, and its status concerns all those present and others. The subject of Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem should be discussed at the bilateral negotiations, according to Security Council Resolution 242 and its clauses, particularly that on the inadmissibility of acquiring land by war. But Jerusalem's general status concerns us all and all divine religions, therefore this subject should be discussed by us.

Gentlemen, the whole world is passing through one of the most critical phases of its development in modern and contemporary history. Either it heads toward stability under the new balance of forces and relations or toward deterioration under ever-increasing challenges. If justice is lost, the Middle East will face a difficult task. Either a new Middle East is born with security, stability, and well-being, flourishing along with the rise of just peace, or such a new Middle East, which the region has been desiring for decades, will be buried alive.

Perhaps our meeting today in Moscow, along with the Washington meetings, will together constitute the creation of a new Middle East.

Thank you, gentlemen, and God's peace and mercy be upon you.

Kuwait's 'Abdallah al-'Uthman

JN2801174092 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1159 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Speech by Dhari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman, Kuwaiti minister of state for cabinet affairs and acting foreign minister, at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: To start with, I am pleased to express the appreciation of my country, Kuwait, to the Russian Federation—its government and people—for hosting this historic conference of ours in this historic, old, and beautiful capital, Moscow.

Despite all the events and radical, historic, and decisive transformations which this part of our world is going through, the Russian leadership's resolve to shoulder its international responsibilities and determination to effectively participate in the formulation of the future of our region constitutes a practical and positive contribution to push forward the wheels of history on the path of peace, stability, and security in order to build a civilization based on the just principles of balanced human relations. To you, our friends, we extend all appreciation and gratitude.

At the same time, we note our appreciation for the United States of America, which shoulders the greatest burden in view of its responsibility and effective and influential role in formulating the Middle East peace process with a spirit of responsibility, follow-up, and perseverance.

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: The State of Kuwait appreciates this important multilateral organizational meeting, which convenes at this high level of representation by various countries in the world and which will discuss all the subjective factors that may lead to progress in spreading an atmosphere of peace in the Middle East on the firm pillars of justice and within the framework of international legitimacy, which has set principles and controls in the UN Charter to establish security and stability all over the world.

As for this premise, no one can dispute the fact that the world community should, as it seeks to resolve the Middle East problem, concentrate primarily on the Palestine question with all of its dimensions, particularly the right of the Palestinian individual to freely exercise his right to self-determination and to formulate his own future in a climate of security and stability on his land and in his homeland, like every individual in any other country.

We seek today, through a harmonious international effort, to reach a just and acceptable solution to this question, which has imposed its bitter reality on the world's conscience for over half a century, a solution that guarantees the attainment of the Palestinian Arab people's legitimate rights on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished guests: The new world order passed a real test when it decisively confronted the unjust aggression launched by Iraq against the State of Kuwait. That new world order had indeed been able to attain a unanimous, firm will to defeat the aggression through all legitimate means, including military operations. Therefore, we are confident that this new world order is indeed capable of dealing positively with all problems in the world today, including the Middle East problem.

Mr. Chairman, gentlemen: My country's delegation reaffirms to your esteemed conference its confidence in, and optimism about, the new world order. My country supports all efforts that seek to achieve peace in the world;, a peace that is based on the principles of the UN Charter, on justice, and on the principle of the balance of rights. The State of Kuwait, which has suffered, and is still suffering, from the unjust Iraqi aggression and its repercussions—represented now in the continued detention of a number of its citizens in the jails of that aggressive regime—also believes in the need to resolve conflicts through negotiations and dialogue and rejects aggression, violence, and armed conflict, as well as the destruction and damage that result from it, to attain regional or hegemonistic gains. These things have been bypassed by the civilized world, and it no longer accepts them in this age.

Mr. Chairman, gentlemen: Peace has requirements which the concerned parties must understand and acknowledge. It is inconceivable that peace can be achieved unless its parties feel that is based on right and justice. Peace cannot be achieved so long as a party continues to feel injustice and oppression. On this basis, the Israeli party is asked to work to provide opportunities for a peace that is based on justice in the Middle East. Naturally, this can only be achieved by complete withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories in accordance with UN Resolutions 242 and 338, including holy Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and southern Lebanon, and halting the building of settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

In conclusion, I extend to you all appreciation and respect. I wish this meeting of ours, as well as the committees meetings, progress and success in their tasks. Peace be upon you.

Omani State Minister Bin-'Alawi

JN2801163192 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1207 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Speech by Yusuf Bin-'Alawi, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Mr. Andrey Kozyrev, foreign minister of the

Russian Federation, Mr. James Baker, U.S. secretary of state, and heads of the participating delegations:

Allow me at the beginning of my speech to express my pleasure, and that of the delegation accompanying me, to be in Moscow which is sharing with Washington the responsibility for supervising the Middle East peace process. I also take this occasion to renew my country's congratulations and welcome to the newly established Commonwealth of Independent States. Also, on this occasion I would like to salute the Russian people for the distinct role they played in reaching where they now are, which also helped in crystallizing the new world order on which we pin hopes for attaining more cooperation and building separated from the negative sides of tension and war. I deeply regret the fact that Syria, Lebanon, and other Arab states have not participated in this meeting. I am also dissatisfied by the fact that the Palestinian representatives were not allowed to participate in these meetings. We hope that all parties will be able to participate in the upcoming meetings.

The Palestine question has always been the main reason for instability in the Middle East. Many conflicts, wars, and human and material tragedies for the people in the region have frequently resulted from it. My country has always supported all sincere efforts to resolve this question based on international resolutions in a manner that would attain a just and comprehensive peace for all parties in the region. In this regard, I reiterate my country's appreciation of the great efforts being exerted by the chairmen of the conference to help the Middle East countries anchor the pillars of peace, stability, and development in the region. We also welcome the other countries from outside the Middle East that join us in the negotiations at this stage of the Middle East peace conference. No doubt, their presence will be important and necessary to help the main concerned countries make this conference a success.

We followed with great interest the second stage of the peace conference which was confined to direct bilateral negotiations. Despite the slow pace of the negotiations and the fears expressed by some parties on the substantial issues of the Middle East conflict, which are basic to realizing a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace that would in turn result in normalizing relations among the region's states, we welcomed the third stage of the conference. We should not consider the multilateral stage an alternative to the second stage of the direct talks. The direct negotiations must remain the basis and the essence, and they must be pushed forward with force and enthusiasm in order to make tangible progress toward peace built on UN Resolutions 242 and 338, which are concerned with the concept of land for peace. Out of our awareness that the road to peace is arduous and long, we call on everyone to exert more patience, wisdom, and flexibility. We are confident that the Arab parties are more determined than ever to achieve a just and honorable peace. We hope that the Israelis will show more good will and flexibility. This is an opportunity that must not be lost.

Basic topics presented before this conference, which is considered the third stage of the Middle East peace conference, must be addressed. The first topic is the suffering of the Palestinian refugees. The conference must address this topic with courage, honesty, and compassion in order to find practical means and ways to end the suffering of the refugees and enable them feel their affiliation with the land and soil and employ their resources in their land, farms, and shops. We are confident that the world, which is experiencing this problem and which is represented in this conference today, has enough ability and will to overcome the difficulties of the past.

Second, it is very important to address the issue of weapons of mass destruction that are stockpiled in the Middle East region, and to get rid of them within the framework of attaining peace. We fully realize that the region's states are still doubting and mistrustful with regard to the disposal of their stocks of weapons of mass destruction. Our objective must be to attain peace. The great amount of money spent on the means of war and destruction must be used in programs for development, stability, and peace. In its first stages, this conference must obtain a declaration by all parties that they accept the principle of getting rid of weapons of mass destruction, and it must set up a table or program for taking practical steps toward peace in parallel with other steps to get rid of these weapons.

The third topic before this conference is to preserve the environment of the Middle East from all forms of pollution. My country is concerned with preserving the environment and combating the dangers of environmental pollution. We realize that shouldering this huge responsibility, which is necessary, is not easy. It is also very expensive. Middle East countries can cooperate, however, to put into effect an ambitious program in this direction. My country is ready to positively participate, with its modest experience, in this field.

Fourth, the problem of water is a global one. However, it is particularly pressing in the Middle East countries, and it is the most important element for stability and development. During this decade the Middle East countries have had no choice but to seek a regional program that will achieve the fair use of water. In the foreseeable future, water sources will be a real problem in light of progress and increased population. We believe that this problem must be faced and scientifically studied from this point in time to enable the Middle East countries to gain the scientific technology to carry out large-scale desalination operations by building advanced research centers, through the help of industrial countries to decrease the expense of desalination.

Fifth, the problem of economic development is a basic one. No progress in this regard or on the issues already mentioned can be made except when all participants are convinced of the importance of peace, and when they clearly declare their commitment to its attainment based on each owner getting his rights. We call on Israel to show responsibility and to sincerely contribute to the

success of the direct talks for us to be able to work in a positive manner on the issues presented to this conference. Thank you.

Qatari Foreign Minister al-Khatir

JN2801165492 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1217 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Speech by Qatari Foreign Minister Mubarak Bin-'Ali al-Khatir at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Mr. Chairman: It pleases me to begin my speech by extending my thanks to the cosponsors of the conference, the Russian Federation and the United States, for the noble invitation they extended to my country to participate in this solemn gathering. I would also like to thank our hosts, the people and officials of Moscow whose warm reception made us forget about the cold weather and for their hospitality and good care. Furthermore, it pleases me to affirm that the State of Qatar accepted the invitation because it has a principled position that calls for resolving international conflicts through peaceful means and for holding negotiations to resolve disputes among states. The State of Qatar, which has always supported Palestinian rights at international forums, is interested in seeing an honorable and just end put to this protracted conflict that has caused our Palestinian brothers, as well as our brothers in the countries adjacent to Israel, to suffer immensely as a result of Israeli aggression and occupation. Now that the entire world is convinced of the need to reach a just solution to this issue, which was supported by the world community, represented by the United Nations and the UN Security Council and which won the sympathy of big powers—something that caused us to go to the Madrid negotiations in October after 40 years, then to Washington over the past two months, and then to Moscow today—we feel immense satisfaction and look forward with a great deal of hope and optimism to a just and durable solution to this conflict.

Convening this meeting years ago would have been an impossible dream of peace-loving people all over the world. They wanted this meeting to convene when they drafted the preamble to the UN Charter in order to save future generations from the calamities of war and to work for peaceful coexistence based on good neighborliness.

Mr. Chairman, we are advocates of peace. For this reason we came to this conference, carrying with us the aspirations of our peoples who believe in peace. We share with other world peoples their hopes for peace; however, the peace that we cherish must be based on justice, freedom, and equality. It must be based on respect for the sovereignty and independence of states. It must be a peace that cherishes a man's dignity and human rights. It must be a peace based on the principles and rules of international law and international legitimacy, a peace based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

If peace is to be achieved in accordance with all of these principles, rules, and norms, then there will be no peace so long as the territories are occupied, human rights are denied, and a man's dignity and freedom are violated. Similarly, peace will not be achieved so long as settlements are being built, houses demolished, and people deported from their land. Besides, peace contravenes expansionism and encroachment.

He who wants peace must have faith in peace and make sacrifices to achieve it. Besides, he must free himself from his greed and illegal ambitions. There can be no peace so long as there is injustice, oppression, and racism. The world community in which we live and coexist is currently composed of communities that live on certain land tracts known as states. As for international law and international norms, they spell out the obligations and duties to be honored by these political entities in their relations with one another and also toward the people who live on these land tracts.

One of the most important duties of states is to safeguard security and peace, respect the sovereignty and independence of other states, and refrain from using or threatening force. These are the most important principles, objectives, and purposes enshrined in the UN Charter. Hence, if we really seek peace and want to achieve it, then we must abandon others' territories, show respect for human rights and man's dignity, as well as pursue a policy of good neighborliness, refrain from confiscating the rights of others and encroaching on them, and give up dreams of expansion.

For almost 50 years, our region has been subjected to several wars, yet the conflict remains unresolved, needing a just solution. These wars have caused immense losses in human lives, property, and fields, which should have been used in development and construction, and not in preparing for war and in war reconstruction endeavors. Has the time come for bringing about a just peace?

Mr. Chairman, we strongly hope that this meeting and later meetings will look into all the important issues listed on the agenda, as well as those that could arise during the negotiations, such as disarmament, the optimal use of water resources, fighting pollution so that we can have an environment that befits a decent living, addressing the issues of Palestinian refugees, and addressing the dimensions of economic development in a bid to bring about regional stability. It is my firm belief that this sentiment is also shared by all leaders, officials, and peoples in the Gulf, and the Arab world as well.

Mr. Chairman, as we participate in this round of talks, we fully realize that the talks will not be an alternative to the direct bilateral talks, especially as it is impossible to bring about disarmament, cooperation in the fields of economic development, protection of the environment,

and sharing the water resources unless tangible progress is made in the bilateral negotiations in the direction of achieving true peace and unless the parties engaged in the bilateral negotiations express a serious desire to achieve peace and eliminate all obstacles.

Talking about the issues which prompted us to meet today will be meaningless if the occupation is maintained and people's rights continue to be denied, because priority must be given to peace. Peace is the foundation of any possible cooperation in all walks of life. Furthermore, disarmament is impossible to achieve as long as the fear of war is still there. We would like to affirm that we came to contribute our share in achieving a just peace. We are ready to participate in making peace, with all that the word peace entails. Peace is development; peace is disarmament; peace is tolerance, cooperation, and fraternity; peace is a war declared on poverty, hunger, ignorance, and sickness. Have all the parties participating in these negotiations come to achieve the peace desired by mankind? I hope so. May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you. [applause]

Saudi Foreign Minister

JN2801173392 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1226 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Speech by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. May peace and blessings be upon the noblest of all prophets and messengers.

Your Excellency Andrey Kozyrev, foreign minister of the Russian Federation; Your Excellency James Baker, secretary of state of the United States of America; Your Excellencies the heads of delegations; ladies and gentlemen: I am honored to convey to you and to this conference the sincerest wishes of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and his thanks to this ancient country's officials for hosting this conference in spite of the historic changes the country is experiencing. I also am honored to convey his commendation to His Excellency U.S. President George Bush, whose great efforts in this cause have been undertaken with tireless determination by Mr. James Baker. These efforts have resulted in the convocation of this historic meeting and also the earlier Madrid conference, by which the Middle East peace process has been launched.

The U.S.-Russian sponsorship of this conference, as well as the participation of the EC states, the states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and other states that have positively supported and effectively contributed to securing peace in our region, clearly signal international unanimity on the need to establish international legitimacy in order to enhance security and stability in the Middle East.

In the lives of peoples and in nations, there are decisive turning points that lead to radical and deeply rooted changes affecting their future and fate. Such turning points also provide historic opportunities to secure just solutions to problems and issues. We faced such a turning point when the Gulf region experienced terrible, unimaginable events. At that time, the entire international community confronted aggression, and the entire world refused to recognize a status quo dictated by force and imposed by aggression. The world also supported right, justice, and international legitimacy.

Today, we are faced with another turning point that provides us with specific options and alternatives. The lessons of history have taught us not to miss or ignore such options and alternatives, as they constitute opportunities that may not recur. In his address to the UN General Assembly in September 1988, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, said that all our efforts for a better life for mankind will be futile if a just, durable peace remains unattainable. He, may God preserve him, has explained his understanding of peace by saying: Peace is an indivisible whole. Peace is a right that must not be monopolized by a certain group, nor should it apply to one issue and exclude another. Peace cannot be established and maintained unless it is based on justice. Peace is not an acknowledgement of the status quo; neither is it a surrender to force and oppression.

Thanks to its Islamic faith, which calls for peace, and in light of its vanguard role in human civilization, our Arab nation is attending this meeting to affirm its willingness to work for a peace based on right and justice and to contribute through its cultural heritage and moral values to this action according to the concepts of Islam and its noble ways. These have been manifested by Almighty God in his holy book to his messenger Muhammad—may the peace and blessings of God be upon him—when He said: Invite all to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; argue with them in ways that are best. [Koranic verse]

Peace is one of the demands and pillars of Islam, because this religion is based on establishing rights, applying justice, renouncing falsehood, and avoiding injustice and aggression in all its forms. Almighty God says in His book: Therefore, if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and instead send you guarantees of peace, then God has opened no way for you to war against them. [Koranic verse] God also says: However, if the enemy incline toward peace, you must also incline toward peace and trust in God. [Koranic verse]

Just like Judaism and Christianity, Islam prohibits the taking of life and also aggression, except as justice warrants. Islam considers that to be one of deadliest of sins and taboos. Islam considers the safeguarding, respecting, and protecting of human life to be one of the great acts that brings man closer to God. God has explained this in His holy book when He said: On that account: We ordained for the children of Israel that if any one slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land—it

would be as if he slew the whole people; and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people. [Koranic verse]

Your Excellencies, we now see signs of an emerging new world order, based on the principles of the United Nations and on international legitimacy, an order permeated by equality among states—regardless of whether they are large or small, rich or poor. This order includes peoples' right to sovereignty and independence and their right to live in peace; the safeguarding of the inviolability of internationally recognized borders of each and every state; an order based on peoples' right to self-determination and nations' sovereignty over their wealth and resources; an order that leaves no room for tyranny or domination and gives no chance for blackmail or provocation, that advocates peaceful endeavors as a course to be pursued to resolve conflicts and rejects the use of force or threats of force to achieve expansionist objectives or economic ambitions.

The Middle East cannot be an exception. We are part of this world, which currently is moving away from polarization and tension. We also support this world in its new endeavors to surmount crises, overcome troublesome problems, and build a new world order based on cooperation, understanding, freedom, and peace. It is time for our region to have its fair share of security, peace, and stability; to direct all capabilities to construction; to devote all its resources to building; and to use all its resources for development.

The Middle East, with its ancient civilizations, not to mention its material and human resources, can provide a decent life for all its peoples. It can also serve as a flourishing oasis of stability, culture, and creativity. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has supported the peace initiative from the beginning and has voiced its determination to take part in these peace efforts. For this reason it welcomed the convening of this meeting and the establishment of regional foundations for peace under these particular circumstances. I feel that we are duty-bound to state clearly from the outset that regardless of the ideas and aspirations we may set out and regardless of the immense goodwill we could affirm, it is impossible to conceive of making real progress that is in harmony with these aspirations, hopes, and intentions so long as Arab territories remain under the yoke of occupation and Palestinians are denied their right to self-determination. Consequently, our basic objective is to get the peace process back on track.

This unprecedented meeting is meant to advance the peace process and establish a just, durable, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. This multilateral meeting serves to complement the peace process begun in Madrid and not to serve as a substitute for this process. It is a meeting whose task is to create a positive climate for the success of the bilateral talks that are based primarily on international legitimacy, on UN Resolutions 242 and 338, and on the principle of land for peace, and the requirements entailed in this principle; namely, viewing holy Jerusalem as an indivisible part of the occupied territories. This requires the Jerusalem issue to assume its proper place in negotiations, just as all other occupied Arab territories.

If the nonparticipation of major parties to the conflict signifies anything, it is to alert the world community and the cosponsors of the conference to the possible collapse of the ongoing peace process due to the conduct of another major party to the conflict which has obstructed the bilateral negotiations. Therefore, we appeal to the cosponsors of this conference and to the world community as a whole to respond properly to this alarm in order to ensure the success of the bilateral negotiations and, consequently, the continuation of the peace process.

What particularly pains us is that the Palestinian delegation that came to Moscow was unable to participate in this meeting. While discussing the foundations of peace in our region, it is impermissible to place impossible conditions on Palestinian participation. They must be considered major partners in the efforts to establish peace, especially as they are the true victims of this conflict.

While expressing support for those who spoke before us demanding that a working team be formed and tasked with the issue of Palestinian refugees, we wonder how this can be accomplished when the diaspora Palestinians are denied the chance to take part in this team's meetings. Hence, the participation of Palestinians from the occupied territories and the diaspora in this conference must be ensured. Consequently, on surmounting the obstacles at the two rounds of the Washington bilateral negotiations, we look forward to seeing the removal of the conditions that were imposed on Palestinian representation so that the Palestinian delegation can play its role in full and on an equal basis with other delegations. We must also reiterate that the settlements in the occupied Arab territories and the deportation of Palestinians constitute an obstacle to peace. The results that will be reached at this meeting will shape the destiny of future generations inside and outside the Middle East. Furthermore, there is an organic linkage among Middle East problems; for example, it is impossible to separate the problems pertaining to the environment, water, and economy, on the one hand, and political realities, on the other. All of our policies and endeavors aimed at safeguarding the interests of our region and its peoples will be deficient as long as we make efforts to address some of these issues at the expense of others. True security, real stability, and comprehensive peace are unattainable objectives unless people are convinced that their basic needs will be met. We refer here to their needs for justice and fairness, to their aspirations for dignity and pride, and to their yearning for a decent life for themselves and for future generations.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, our world community is on the threshold of a new, significant, historical era, the promises and challenges of which loom on the horizon. If we are to avert potential catastrophe in

the Middle East, we must shoulder our responsibilities vis-a-vis eliminating the danger inherent in the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, because the presence of these weapons in our region is no longer a closely guarded secret. No, it is a common and well-known fact. These weapons are an ugly specter and a terrible nightmare that give mankind sleepless nights and threaten the destinies of peoples. Moreover, we must prevent environmental disasters, which daily threaten the people, animals, and plants on this planet in general, and in our region in particular. In addition, we must do our utmost to achieve comprehensive development and raise our peoples' living standards so that they can live in prosperity, peace, security, and stability.

My country, which has always condemned aggression against people everywhere regardless of the identity of the aggressors and which also has consistently welcomed all constructive accomplishments regarding the freedom and independence achieved by people everywhere, today reaffirms its readiness to work with the world community with an open hand, with immense goodwill and desire for cooperation, and with tremendous hope and trust to find just solutions to all our issues and problems in accordance with the principles of legitimacy, justice, and equality. In all its moves, my country is driven by the eternal principles of Islam and the true basics of Arabism.

After all, our duty to future generations dictates that we build firm and just foundations that will provide them with a free and decent living and a prosperous and good life, and that also will chart the future to which we have always aspired, a future not subject to the obsession of war and not marked by nightmares of annihilation; a future that crushes the weapons of destruction by turning their metal into keys for prosperity for all; a future that eliminates the dangers of pollution, the misery of backwardness, and the sufferings of displacement. This can be achieved only if we build the foundations of a peace based on right and justice, allowing this peace to take root and enabling its pillars to be entrenched. We sincerely hope that this meeting will contribute to our efforts to achieve these objectives. May God's peace and mercy be upon you. [applause]

Tunisia's Foreign Minister

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[Speech by Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Mr. Chairman, Esteemed Ministers, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: Fortunately, our conference is being held in a country that has witnessed the unleashing of freedom after decades of repression, as well as the victory of noble values, including political pluralism and respect for human rights. This sound policy has been pursued by Tunisia since the start of its new era on 7 November 1987.

I want to note at the beginning of my speech U.S. and Russian efforts to sponsor this peace process, which could not have started were it not for their determination and honesty to the cause of peace, with the support of the international community. We are also glad that we have succeeded, along with those who are sincere, to entrench this effort through many initiatives, including Tunisia's call for the Security Council to set a date to convene a peace conference on the Middle East before the end of 1991. Therefore, we did not hesitate to attend the Madrid conference within the framework of the Arab Maghreb Union. Now, we are participating in this meeting out of our belief in the principle of peace, justice, solving problems through peaceful means, and preferring dialogue to futile confrontation.

Tunisia has always stressed the need to solve the Palestine question through negotiations and in accordance with the principles of international legitimacy in order to guarantee recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to contribute to enhancing coexistence, security, and stability in the region. Tunisia, which embraced the Palestinian leadership following the tragedy the Palestinian people experienced once again in 1982, expressed its satisfaction with the policy the Palestinian organization [as heard] had adopted since the convening of the Palestine National Council in Algiers in 1988—a policy thst pursues peaceful means to achieve legitimate goals.

The posit' e approach the Arab sides adopted at Madrid and Washington conferences is based on the principles of the numerous Arab peace initiatives, especially the Fes plan of 1982. That plan projected the Arab side's honesty and efforts to restore right to its rightful owners and replace expansion with a just peace. If the basic goal of this conference is to achieve peace, in deed and not in words, then the policy of exclusion should be abandoned and dialogue with the opponent should be raised in order to reach a joint understanding of future relations. No problem in history has been resolved by ignoring or isolating the opponent. This imposes the principle of equal representation for the two main sides of the dispute at this conference.

The continuation of this process and its development toward the desired goal will, in our view, be determined by certain factors, the first of which emphasizes the clear political will to abide by international legitimacy represented in Security Council resolutions, especially Resolutions 242 and 338, which worked out a number of principles, the most important being the inadmissibility of the forcible acquisition of other people's lands, the need to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, including holy Jerusalem, and resolving the Palestinian refugee problem.

This conference was convened on the principle of land for peace, and there is no room to question or interpret

that principle at one's convenience. It is natural that this principle should lead to an immediate halt to the settlement process and to plans to change the demographic structure through eviction and deportation. These moves conflict with international charters, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention, and cast doubts on Israel's real intentions and its participation in this conference.

What is the use of negotiating if plans continue to Judaize Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip and to fill them with new immigrants? This conference is called upon to look into the issue of refugees who were expelled from their houses by force. We demand that a committee be set up to consider resolving this issue on the basis of Resolution 194, which guarantees the right to repatriation. The second factor lies in stopping the policy of force and trying to achieve a mutual recognition between the two parties to the dispute.

It is now taken for granted that the real dispute is a Palestinian-Israeli one, rather than an Arab-Israeli one, and that any endeavor to search for peace primarily requires the Palestinian people's participation and representation in a way they deem proper. We hope that this conference will be able to realize the Palestinian desire to make its contribution, as a basic party, and to participate in the conference committees. This participation is important to the future of the entire region in light of the Palestinian people's fate.

It is unrealistic to discuss security, disarmament, economic development, water distribution, and other issues related to peaceful coexistence in the Middle East if we ignore the basic problem, from which all the region's tragedies have emerged. Out of our desire to make this conference successful, we stress the need to attach the required importance to the Palestinian representation to guarantee the Palestinian delegation's effective participation in the conference's work.

Needless to say, the multilateral negotiations are closely linked with the progress the bilateral talks make, because we cannot imagine any cooperation, coexistence, or real peace under hegemony, expansion, and usurpation of land. Therefore, in order to achieve equality and to guarantee security and stability in the region, the negotiating process should proceed in a balanced manner; that is, to apply the principle of land for peace and agree, at the same time, on ways of joint cooperation.

We have come to Moscow hoping to contribute to the start of a new era, to which a number of heads of delegations referred—an era based on mutual respect and cooperation. We expect that this desire will receive the response it deserves—with realizing the long-term interests of the people's of the entire region and understanding the requirements of the joint fate.

We expect the international community to shoulder its full responsibility in dealing with this issue on the basis of the same standards used to deal with the other international issues in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Namibia, South Africa, and other chronic problem areass. If we unite our efforts, the last dispute of the 20th century can be settled to guarantee a new world order based on international legitimacy. God's peace and mercy be upon you.

Turkey's Hikmet Cetin

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[Speech by Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral talks—live, in English with simultaneous translation into Arabic; processed from the English, except for italicized passage where Arabic voiceover dominates]

[Text] Foreign Minister Kozyrev, Secretary of State Baker, distinguished colleagues and delegates: At the outset, I wish to express my government's appreciation for the efforts of the *Russian Government in hosting this conference in Moscow and we hope it will contribute to a just and comprehensive solution in the Middle East. Our host, Russia, deserves great appreciation from us for the excellent arrangements which we can see before us. The Turkish Government adheres to the ideas presented today.* It was equally encouraging to observe that the bilateral negotiating parties also displayed a positive and constructive attitude.

Excellencies, the Madrid conference started an era of hope in the Middle East. This era cannot be evaluated in isolation from the great changes set in motion in the last several years. A new spirit of international solidarity and cooperation has emerged. The Gulf crisis was the first test and it was passed successfully. The relevance of the Middle East as a strategic gateway to the new international order and its military economic importance are today better understood than ever. Therefore, the Middle East peace process remains as a top priority and the foremost challenge before us. World peace may depend on it. Confronting this challenge requires the sustainment of the ongoing dialogue, a comprehensive multilateral cooperation, embracing the entire conflict's zone, and making sure that the region does not obtain mass-destruction weapons; otherwise, all the efforts made so far might not be enough to achieve our goals.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, collective responsibility and independence are two key concepts that describe present world trends. The bilateral negotiating parties, the other regionals, as well as the rest of the countries represented at this organizational meeting, are mutually aware of the international dimension of the Middle East dilemma. Since peace and security are indivisible, the bilateral negotiating parties should be afforded all assistance in their search to attain these goals. In fact, this is how we evaluate the challenging task before the Moscow multilateral organizational meeting. We are here to combine and enhance national, regional, and international efforts for the sake of global peace and prosperity.

Excellencies, Turkey, given its sui generis location in the region and her viable dialogue with all the parties to the Middle East conflict, has always followed closely and with deep interest the developments in the Middle East. We have always supported and worked for the establishment of just and durable peace and stability in the region. The Palestinian problem and the overall Arab-Israeli conflict no doubt constitute the main elements of the existing instability. A just and lasting solution to these issues must be found if we want peace and security in the region. As we have expressed on many previous occasions, such a solution can only be found on the one hand through the withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories she has occupied since 1967, the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, including their right to self-determination; and on the other hand, through the acknowledgment of the right of all parties in the region to live in peace and stability within secure and recognized borders.

It is also of utmost importance to put an end to building new settlements, contrary to relevant international conventions. We support all peace efforts to this end and, in fact, this is why we welcomed the convening of the Middle East peace conference in Madrid. We look at this conference as a historic opportunity for the establishment of the long-awaited peace, stability, and security in the region. From the developments that have so far taken place at the conference, it is quite clear that the peace process will be a difficult and long one, requiring patience and courage. In fact, it is not realistic to expect the solution to such delicate and complex issues in a very short period of time. What is important is the determination and will of the parties to discuss their problems at the bilateral level despite all their divergencies.

We hope that the opportunity created by the Middle East peace conference shall be properly used by all concerned to work out a solution based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. We are, therefore, pleased to participate in this third stage of the Middle East peace conference dedicated to handling prospects of regional cooperation, and we are keen to take a concrete part in all its activities.

Excellencies, now I wish to speak on our understanding of the objective of the multilateral negotiations phase of the Middle East peace conference and our approach to the Moscow organizational meeting. We evaluate the multilateral negotiations running parallel to the bilateral talks among the parties to the conflict as a complementary avenue for progress. We consider the multilateral negotiations as an exercise which should contribute to the success of the bilateral talks by helping to create in the region an environment helpful to the solution of the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

We all know that one main obstacle is the lack of confidence prevailing among the countries in the region. Therefore, the starting point toward any meaningful regional cooperation would be to overcome this obstacle. This could be done on the one hand by enhancing economic cooperation and interdependence among the regional countries, and on the other by exploring ways aimed to launch necessary confidence- and security-building measures. Progress in one field will no doubt have positive impact on the other. It is also our judgment that the agenda of these multilateral negotiations and its contents should be confined to a framework that would have direct bearing on the establishment of the proper circumstances in the region, defusing tension and facilitating the solution of the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Excellencies, the role of economic cooperation in ensuring sustainable development has never been so striking than in today's world. Economic cooperation is also a proven instrument in bringing peoples closer and in paving the way to harmonize interstate relations. In a purely economic sense, there is no reason why what has been achieved elsewhere cannot also be repeated in the Middle East. The region has the necessary potential which, if properly mobilized, will serve the interests of all through the creation of condition of general prosperity and welfare.

Being in close contact with all the countries of the region, we know very well the obstacles in the way of an overall economic cooperation. Nonetheless, we have always emphasized that mutual economic interdependence could create a better environment for the attainment and preservation of peace and stability. This conference provides us with an opportunity do dwell on the merits of regional economic cooperation. To this end, we propose that the economic dimensions of the multilateral process to be initiated by our deliberations here should be devoted, at least during its first stage, to exploratory talks of non-binding nature.

In this context, the identification of possible areas of cooperation of the financial and technical means for economic development and cooperation and of regional resources can be undertaken. Such an approach would be useful not only for demonstrating that the necessary ground for cooperation exists, but also for putting the subsequent steps on the right track. In our view, the right track would be concentrating on the feasibility of projects in such fields as transportation, communications, and energy that would create an integrated infrastructure in the whole region. Such projects, in addition to being visible and meeting concrete needs, have also the merit of creating permanent links around common interests to be jointly protected. This is a way to build mutual confidence. Through such a process, we could also think of developing a new concept of confidence-building but way of joint economic projects.

As to the organizational aspect of the economic dimension of the multilateral process, our approach by its very nature makes necessary a global approach to all factors which have a bearing on regional cooperation. Concerning water, we are aware of its growing importance and its regional implications. We see it as an integral element of overall regional cooperation. Turkey is not a

country with abundant water resources, but we are ready to cooperate in this respect. But I must point out that we will do so in accordance with our own priorities and within the limits of our potentials.

Excellencies, on the confidence- and security-building aspects of regional cooperation, I wish to stress our belief that progress in the fields of arms control and confidence-building will prepare the ground and facilitate the solution to the long-lasting conflicts in the area. Security and confidence-building is a hard task. Its rewards do not always emerge in the short run. The process can only be realized in stages. While our objectives are maintained, we must devise steps, perhaps modest but progressively more effective, to take us to the ultimate target. A significant step that can be taken by parties to this conference is the monitoring of arms transfers and sales to and within the region and keeping them within the range of legitimate defense needs. The recently established United Nations register could be used to monitor the transfer of armaments to the Middle East. We hope that such measures would be the elements of an eventual system of comprehensive confidence- and security-building in the region. Turkey, being an integral part of the Middle East, is prepared to assist, participate in, and contribute to all aspects of the complex process. We are ready to share the experiences we have gained through participation in other processes of arms control and confidence-building.

We are of the view that a viable arms control and confidence-building regime for the region as a whole would enhance regional security and serve to increase mutual trust.

Lastly but most importantly, the plight of the Palestinian refugees must also urgently be addressed in the framework of the multilateral negotiations and their suffering of longstanding must be ended.

Excellencies, in concluding, I would like to reiterate our desire and readiness to participate actively in and contribute to all aspects of the work of the multilateral negotiations phase of the Middle East peace conference. In this spirit, we would be prepared to host meetings as a followup to our work here. We hope that the Moscow meeting will succeed in achieving its objectives by paving the way to lasting peace in the region.

I thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Bahraini Foreign Minister

JN2801161192 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1319 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Speech by Bahraini Foreign Minister Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace conference—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, compassionate. Mr. Andrey Kozyrev, foreign minister of the Russian Federation; Mr. James Baker, U.S. secretary of state; your highnesses and excellencies: To start my speech, I am pleased to convey to you Bahrain's sincerest wishes for the success to this multilateral organizational meeting, which seeks to achieve the aspirations and hopes of the peoples of the Middle East region to live in security, peace, and stability.

The State of Bahrain, which participates in this conference out of its concern and desire to achieve a just peace in the Middle East that is based on international legitimacy and international law, backs and supports the peace process which is based on the principle of building bridges of trust, and the abandonment of the policy of hegemony, occupation, and denying people's rights to self- determination.

On this occasion, I am pleased to hail the ceaseless and sincere efforts exerted by the U.S. Administration and its president, His Excellency President George Bush, and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who took it upon himself to hold constant contacts with the parties to the conflict through his numerous tours of the states of the region concerned with this issue. These contacts had resulted in finding the first steps on the path of the just peace. These steps were described by His Excellency George Bush in the letter of invitation to the Madrid conference as a historic opportunity that truly exists to push forward the efforts to achieve a genuine peace in the region between the Arab states and Israel which is based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. We believe that this peace process is based on the principle of bartering land for peace.

I am also pleased to voice my appreciation to Andrey Kozyrev, foreign minister of the Russian Federation, whose friendly country is hosting this important round of the talks. This confirms the continuity of its historic responsibilities and its influence in the international arena, particularly through its cosponsorship, together with the United States, of this meeting, which we all hope will help put an end to a half-century-old conflict, which saw many wars in which thousands of people were killed. These wars wasted the warring countries' resources and wealth, which were and are needed to achieve wellbeing and prosperity for generations to come.

The dimensions and influences of the Middle East question reach regional and international powers from inside and outside the region whose interests are connected to it in one way or another, and are influenced by what goes on. These powers are also interested in what the region's future will be like in view of the serious repercussions developments in it have on the future of their peoples, and in view of the strategic importance it enjoys; an importance of which all countries in the world are aware. The connections in the one world village are strong and intertwined, because developments in the hotbeds of tension in the sensitive areas affect the entire world community. This view, which is derived from true experience and realistic knowledge, allows us see and

observe the strong connection between the talks which were set off in Madrid and the bilateral talks in Washington on the one hand, and this conference, which should address very important regional issues—such as arms control, environment, water, regional security arrangements for the benefit of all states of the Middle East, and comprehensive economic development—on the other.

We support the proposal to set up a specialized committee to address the issue of Palestinian refugees.

For our brothers in Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon to participate effectively in drawing up a map of the permanent peaceful political relations in the region, they should regain their sovereignty over their territories that have been occupied for so long by Israel, which has gone too far in illegitimate settlement activities. We should also understand the language of the age of the new world order, which rejects all forms of occupation and its justifications and believes in the equity of interests and the collective effort.

For these negotiations to achieve the aspired for objectives, any progress in the work of this conference must coincide with success and progress in the bilateral talks. This will help create an atmosphere of mutual trust and constitute a strong motivating force to move directly to discussions of substantive issues, at the head of which is the issue of the Palestinian people's rights and the return of the occupied Arab territories, which are the core of the conflict in the region and the cause of the lack of security, peace, and stability.

Therefore, today we should turn over a new leaf to establish a just peace in the entire region. We, today in this gathering, must continue to work and make progress with all determination and resolve to achieve that goal which is of interest to all of us. Peace be upon you.

Jordan's Abu-Jabir Comments on Conference

JN2801210292 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1912 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Telephone interview with Jordanian Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, head of the Jordanian delegation to the Moscow multilateral talks, by Muhammad al-Sharif on 28 January—recorded]

[Text] [al-Sharif] Your Excellency, now that the numerous speeches delivered today at the opening session of the Moscow multilateral talks are over, how do you assess the first day's developments?

[Abu-Jabir] As you know, the first day was confined to speeches by heads of delegations. In these speeches, each delegation expressed its view and its country's vision of the entire Middle East peace process. We delivered a speech in which we explained the pillars of the Jordanian position. These pillars are represented by the need for commitment, full and comprehensive commitment to international legitimacy, and by the guideline that any solution to the region's comprehensive problems must be based on the principles of international legitimacy and on the UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338. I want to stress that first, Jordan will not be party to any separate solutions; and second, Jordan is committed to international legitimacy. This legitimacy calls for first, full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and other Arab territories—whether Syrian, Lebanese, or Jordanian; second, recognition of the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people; and third, full withdrawal from Arab Jerusalem which the Arabs and Muslims exalt and place above all other considerations. These were the principles I stressed in my speech. I also said that one cannot imagine establishing any relations or cooperation unless progress, real, basic progress, is made on the issues we discussed. I also stressed the need of the participation of Palestinian representatives who live outside the occupied territories. I also said this in the news conference held this evening. I said: Is it reasonable to settle the region's economic, environmental, and other issues while the Palestinian people are not represented? And, is it reasonable for such things to happen while the Palestinian people are under occupation? These were the issues I stressed in my speech. Last but not least, I asked for the establishment of an additional work team that would deal with the issue of Palestinian refugees. Most Arab delegations, all Arab delegations supported me in this. I believe that the first day was successful. We presented all our views on the Jordanian level, the Jordanian-Palestinian level, and the Jordanian-Arab level. We strongly defended them.

[al-Sharif] Your Excellency, what about your contacts with the heads of the other delegations?

[Abu-Jabir] We contacted all Arab foreign ministers and other Arab representatives who attended this meeting: His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal from Saudi Arabia, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Tunisia, Bahrain, and others. We used whatever means we could to convince the other side, or the cosponsors, of the need for Palestinian representation. This morning, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and I conferred with Mr. James Baker on the issue of Palestinian representation. After that, the U.S. secretary of state declared he would support Palestinian representation in the next phase of the talks, which, we think, will take place in the first two weeks of May. In fact, there was full coordination and cooperation on this issue.

[al-Sharif] The Moscow conference will resume its talks tomorrow morning to discuss the formation of the multilateral committees. Can you give us more details on these committees?

[Abu-Jabir] Four work teams are expected to be established. In fact, five will be set up after we insisted on forming a committee to represent Palestinian refugees. In addition to this committee or work team, there will be committees that will look into issues of environment, economic development, security, disarmament, and, last

but not least, water in the region. Tomorrow, the committees of experts—who are at a level less than foreign ministers—will discuss the time and venue of the coming meetings of these committees.

[al-Sharif] Than you.

[Abu-Jabir] You are welcome.

Israeli Foreign Minister Sees 'Positive' Trend

TA2801162792 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1509 GMT 28 Jan 92

[News conference by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi with Israeli correspondents at the House of the Unions in Moscow—live]

[Text] [Levi] A stage that is an inseparable part of the peace process took place today, a stage to promote the building of confidence and cooperation among the sides with international aid. A past thesis had it that these issues should not be discussed until after the negotiations are completed, that peace should be established first and then we should see. Israel thought otherwise. It believed that intentions should be examined in order to make progress; that in order to discuss security issues in the future, mutual confidence-building measures, as well as the parameters to test their long-term effectiveness, should be created; that channels of communications should be set up to avert mishaps and misunderstandings in the region. When there is something to lose, efforts should be made to avert mishaps. If we carry out all the projects that will give the nations of the region a taste of the fruit of the peace to come, there is no doubt in my mind that we will both build confidence and encourage the sides to try harder and make progress.

One should bear in mind that there is a great deal of suspicion in the Middle East. We have experienced tough and cruel wars. We talk about peace and yearn for peace, but peace must be built. The building of this edifice must start from foundations and proceed to the roof. I am very glad, therefore, that despite prior doubts and hesitations, this move has taken place.

The participation in the talks is impressive. Arab countries in the Persian Gulf which do not share a border with Israel and which experienced aggression last year are taking part. I think that, all in all, their speeches were not a rehash of their own private agendas and were not mere slogans. Although each one has its own position, the majority generally focused on constructive issues, spoke about the future that must be built together, and openly spelled out the word peace, which had been blurred in the past. All in all, the trend is positive .

I am glad about this gathering. The first day ended without a hitch. The working teams will begin working tomorrow. Working procedures, a timetable for the meetings, and the issues to be discussed will be determined. This is an irreversible process. I hope we will be able to fulfill this year what we undertook to do: to speed up the peace process so that at long last we will know no wars, the arms race will stop, and we will start thinking of constructive matters for the benefit of all the peoples of the region.

The message in my speech today was clear: Israel is headed toward peace. Its peace initiative advanced to Madrid and from Madrid to Washington. This meeting in Moscow is also designed to strengthen the position faithfully adhered to by the Israeli Government, as reflected in the fact that it was willing to sacrifice its government coalition. In other words, in order to uphold its fealty to the peace process, the Israeli Government paid with the loss of its majority in the Knesset. Thus, the Israeli Government delivered a message to the people about the preeminence of the peace process and its fealty to it. Thank you very much.

[Mikha'el Karpin of Israeli television] Mr. Levi, the Americans and the Russians are apparently working behind the scenes on a compromise formula concerning the participation of the Palestinians. Will Israel agree to a change in the Madrid formula?

[Levi] Israel remains faithful to what has been agreed and will not allow any deviation from it. It would be like pulling out one brick from a building; if you do that, the entire building collapses. Months of tiring negotiations preceded those agreements. Israel is known for adhering to the agreements it signs. Egypt has boasted of Israel's adherence to its commitments, and in light of this we demand that all the sides proceed likewise.

At the same time, we heard the Russian foreign minister and the U.S. secretary of state, who in his concluding remarks said that they support the inclusion of elements that Israel does not accept, but that this should be done through consensus. Just as peace cannot be imposed from the outside, so one cannot impose partners for cooperation. Hence, we insist on the fulfillment of what had been agreed upon. Whoever removes the land markers will be responsible for getting lost. Israel wants to promote the peace process out of fealty to the agreements reached with all the parties.

[Natan Gutman of Israel Defense Forces Radio] Minister Levi, what will Israel do if a committee on the question of the refugees is convened tomorrow and representatives of the Palestinian diaspora come to it?

[Levi] We will participate in the committee. If people whose participation we oppose show up in violation of earlier agreements, they will sit by themselves. I will be sorry if that is the case. Whoever proceeds in that way will be undermining the peace process. I do not believe that anybody will take such responsibility upon himself. In any event, I am confident that that will not be the case tomorrow.

Views 'Friendly' Meeting With Baker

TA2901113192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1025 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Interview with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi by Natan Gutman in Moscow "after his meeting with James Baker" on 29 January—recorded; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Levi] First of all, the talk was very good, held in a friendly atmosphere. We summed up the situation as follows: first, yesterday's encounter, then the meetings of the work teams today. Everything happened in accordance with earlier agreements, and everything was beyond expectations: attendance was a great achievement, a crowning of all our efforts; every agreement was honored, which prevented undesirable developments.

We discussed the future and raised questions in several areas, including Israeli-U.S. coordination and the cooperation needed if we are to block undesirable developments.

The talk centered on the relations between Israel and the United States, ties that have remained staunch despite occasional disputes or passing disagreements. He praised the joint efforts that have been and will be made. There are issues that need to be addressed directly, discreetly, and with the warmth that is returning to the U.S.-Israeli relations. I am very, very pleased with this talk. As for controversial issues, none were brought up.

[Gutman] Didn't you discuss the issue of guarantees?

[Levi] We will discuss it in the future, after I discuss it with the prime minister at home. Everything is being done in a pleasant atmosphere, one I would describe as demonstratively friendly.

[Gutman] Have you reached an agreement on the issue of Palestinian representation?

[Levi] There has been no deviation from the agreed upon procedures. He reiterated that, as we had expected, he and his Russian counterpart have adhered faithfully to earlier agreements with us and that they allowed no deviation.

Shamir, Levi Reject Diaspora Delegates

TA2901054392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Israel will not deviate from its stand against the participation of representatives from East Jerusalem and outside the territories in the Palestinian delegation. This was decided on in consultations last night between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levi.

A decision was also taken that Israel would participate in the committee on refugees but would not agree to representatives from the so-called Palestinian diaspora sitting in the committee.

Abu-'Ayyash Criticizes Israel's Position

TA2801191292 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Interview with Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, head of the advisory committee to the Palestinian negotiating delegation, by Yoni Ben-Menahem in Jerusalem on 28 January—recorded]

[Text] [Ben-Menahem] The residents here are angry with the Arab states because of their position on Palestinian participation in Moscow.

[Abu-'Ayyash] This general feeling prevailing among the Palestinian people in the occupied territories stems from the fact that the Palestinians believe that the multilateral conference currently under way in Moscow will only benefit Israel and the United States.

[Ben-Menahem] And the Arab countries.

[Abu-'Ayyash] And the Arab countries that believe they may benefit from the normalization of relations. What is the benefit if the Arab Gulf countries export oil to Israel and the latter exports industrial products to the Arab Gulf at the expense of the Palestinian cause, without any progress toward a solution? We do not oppose the multilateral talks per se; we believe that they will help resolve Israel's economic, political, and normalization problems without any progress being made on the bilateral track.

[Ben-Menahem] Where is Arab solidarity?

[Abu-'Ayyash] Arab solidarity exists among the countries taking part in the bilateral talks, but some Arab states have their own individual ideas. As Palestinians, we cannot impose our position on Arab states, just as we cannot allow the Arab states to impose their positions on us. There is an objective understanding of this matter. As Palestinians, we have now come to Moscow—in the corridor also—to prove our goodwill. We want to engage in the multilateral talks, but in a way that guarantees the Palestinian people's representation.

Palestinian Team To Remain Until Talks End

JN2901103992 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 29 Jan 92 p 19

[Text] Amman—AL-DUSTUR has learned from well-informed Palestinian sources that the Palestinian delegation to the Moscow multilateral Middle East peace talks will not leave Moscow. These sources said that the delegation will continue to hold news conferences until the end of the multilateral talks to explain to the world the true Palestinian position and the prerequisites for achieving peace in the Middle East.

Refugee Committee Meets Without Palestinians

NC2901112792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1005 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Moscow, 29 Jan (MENA)—The meeting of the fifth committee in charge of the refugee issue opened in Moscow today. The Palestinian delegation, however, did not participate. Agreement was reached yesterday on forming a fifth committee charged solely with discussing the refugee issue. Under the agreement, Palestinians from outside the occupied territories were to participate in the meetings, but Israel insisted on the formula of Palestinian representation used at the Madrid conference and rejected participation by Palestinians from outside the occupied territory. Responsible sources said the Palestinians will attend the new round of multilateral negotiations expected to resume at the end of April or early May. [passage omitted]

'Abd-Rabbuh on Coordination With Jordan

JN2901104392 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 29 Jan 92 p 1

[Text] Moscow—PLO Executive Committee Member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh appreciates Jordan's firm and clear position as stated in the speech delivered by Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir, head of the Jordanian delegation to the organizational conference of the multilateral negotiations.

'Abd-Rabbuh was speaking to Jordanian media immediately after his meeting with Dr. Abu-Jabir at the latter's place of residence in Moscow last night.

Jordan's speech covered all points of interest to the Palestinian people, 'Abd-Rabbuh said. He stressed that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is proceeding in an excellent and extremely satisfactory manner.

Algeria

FIS' Kebir Says 'Junta' Using Boudiaf

NC2901065692 Paris AFP in English 0430 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Algiers, Jan 29 (AFP)—The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) said here Tuesday the president of the ruling High State Council had been called back to Algeria by those who sent him into exile "to deceive public opinion."

The "junta" that seized power after the January 11 resignation of President Chadli Bendjedid is set to "shed people's blood" behind the back of Mohamed Boudiaf, an open letter by the FIS to Boudiaf said.

Boudiaf, an independence war veteran, returned from a 28-year exile in Morocco to assume the post of president of the High State Council on January 16.

A copy of the letter, signed by the FIS's foreign affairs spokesman, Rabah Kebir, was made available to AFP.

Kebir was arrested by police shortly after sending the letter.

"We are baffled that Mohamed Boudiaf, who dedicated his youth to fight for the freedom of his people and its right to self-determination is being used...by a ruling junta to hide behind his back and carry out its own plan," he said.

Police Arrest Kebir

LD2801230792 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2200 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Rabah Kebir, the man in charge of the Islamic Salvation Front's external relations, was arrested this evening. The news given by the FIS is confirmed by APS, quoting sources from Algiers police headquarters. These same sources told APS that this arrest follows the release of FIS Communique No. 10, signed by Rabah Kebir, which calls on Algerians not to recognize the new authorities. The same sources add that Rabah Kebir will appear in Algiers court tomorrow morning. [passage omitted]

Algiers Police Surround Badjarah; Gunfire Reported

LD2901160592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] APS, citing eyewitnesses, reports that there was a gathering in Badjarah this morning when the security forces arrested two imams of the mosques of [names indistinct]. The same source reports that shots were heard and that it is not known yet whether there were any victims.

[Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French at 1400 GMT on 29 January adds in a similar report: "Badjarah district was surrounded by police after demonstrators ransacked the National Liberation Front headquarters. A total of 300 young people ransacked offices of the former single party. The demonstrators, whose ranks gradually swelled, erected a barricade across the district's main road, which forced cars to turn back. The demonstration began after two imams were arrested. District police under attack by the young people withdrew toward the police station. Police reinforcements from the riot squad were sent to the scene."]

'Skirmishes' Continue

LD2901162192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Skirmishes between police and youths of the Badjarah quarters, in the capital's suburbs, started before noon today and continue.

Numerous riot police reinforcements and civil policemen arrived in the area to patrol the main road, from the Badjarah Police Station past the main bus station, up to the Army's equipment barracks in the same quarter. APS, citing eyewitnesses, says groups of Badjarah youth continue to stone police every now and then and chant antipolice slogans.

Meanwhile, shots in the direction of the rioters are still being heard. Hussein-Dey department police refused to comment on whether there are victims or arrests as a result of these skirmishes, but they attributed them to groups of youths stoning a police transporter as it passed by on the Badjarah road before noon today, saying it is unlikely that it is connected with the arrest of an imam from La Glaciere quarter's mosque.

Arrested FIS Editors To Face Prosecution

LD2801180392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] A source at the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] national provisional executive bureau confirmed today that Mr. Salah Gouami, director general of the weekly EL-MOUNKID, the mouthpiece of the FIS, and also Mr. Fouad Delici, editor of the FIS French-language EL-FOURKAN, were arrested yesterday by men of the national gendarmerie. The report has been confirmed by the national gendarmerie.

[Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic at 1800 GMT on 28 January adds: "The national gendarmerie command confirms that officials from EL-MOUNKID and EL-FOURKAN, organs of the FIS, will be brought before the prosecutor of the Republic once their statements have been heard."]

Al-Nahdah Calls for 'Serious Dialogue' on Events

LD2901090692 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The Islamic al-Nahdah movement led by Cheikh Abdallah Djaballah has called for a serious dialogue between the parties concerned, those in the government

and the opposition, to contain the crisis and resolve the country's political, social, and economic problems.

The al-Nahdah movement has suggested that the Consultative Council which was expected to be set up should replace the National People's Assembly, provided that it is given authority and is composed of political parties on the basis of the proportion of votes that they won in the 26 December elections.

Ministry Reaffirms Ban on Collection of Donations

LD2901083692 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] In a statement issued yesterday the Interior Ministry issued a reminder that collecting financial donations without a permit from the interior minister or from a wali [governor], in accordance with legal stipulations, is absolutely forbidden and that any violation of this by anyone collecting donations without a permit will be subject to the penalties stipulated by the law.

The statement by the Interior and Local Communities Ministry was issued after an appeal in the press for donations to be collected and deposited in the post office account of a political association.

The statement added that the state has adopted every measure to support the victims of weather conditions and that it would not allow attempts by political associations to take its place and exploit the suffering of citizens under these difficult circumstances.

FLN Central Committee Suspends Session

LD2801211392 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Excerpts] The Central Committee of the National Liberation Front [FLN], which has been meeting in an extraordinary session since Saturday, has in the end decided, with a majority vote, to suspend its proceedings and to leave the session open. Here is Rachida Hamadi:

[Begin unidentified person recording] We conclude the extraordinary session. [end recording]

[Hamadi] After four days of vociferous and contradictory debates, the FLN Central Committee has not come out with a result, except the one suggested by the secretary general to the Central Committee—that the latter leave this session open and resume it in the next two or three weeks. Some members objected to this solution, and, after the end of the meeting today, more than 120 members held a meeting in one of the conference halls. They then sent a delegation to the secretary general to inform him of their rejection of the adjournment decision, while others saw this as a delay to arrange ideas and think quietly. [passage omitted]

In this meeting the FLN did not discuss the points it was supposed to discuss, and it did not announce a single position concerning the current situation in the country. Is leaving the session open the solution, or is adjourning it a search for a solution?

FLN's Mehri Discusses Front's New Role

PM2701150292 Milan L'UNITA in Italian 21 Jan 92 p 11

[Interview with Abdelhamid Mehri, National Liberation Front, FLN, secretary general, by Gabriel Bertinetto; date and place not given]

[Text] Algiers—[Bertinetto] After many years in power the National Liberation Front [FLN] is going into opposition. How do you plan to tackle what is an unprecedented situation for you?

[Mehri] To be honest, we are not yet completely in opposition. We are, rather, going through a period of gradually sliding toward an opposition role. A situation is developing whereby the FLN will be no longer directly involved in government as it previously was. In other words, we are changing from a single party into a partly like the rest. There is an element of ambiguity in all this because, for instance, some of our Central Committee members are in the government.

[Bertinetto] The first official meeting between leaders of the FLN and the National Salvation Front [FIS]—the Algerian fundamentalists' party—took place a few days ago. You started a dialogue. Why? Because your assessment of the FIS is not in line with the negative stereotype of it that the present authorities subscribe to, or because you hope to influence it in this way?

[Mehri] Our attitude stems from our concern to prevent the country from plunging into an even more acute crisis. We met with the FIS because they asked us to do so—and urgently. The FLN now sets itself three objectives: 1) to avert a slide toward violence and civil war; 2) to safeguard the nation's unity; and 3) to facilitate dialogue between all the sides involved in order to resolve the country's serious problems.

[Bertinetto] If the dialogue with the FIS were to result in a proper alliance—in opposition now, but perhaps in government in the future—are you not afraid that the fundamentalists will use you as long as you serve their purposes and then discard you, as happened in Iran?

[Mehri] The situation in Algeria is quite different. At one time we proposed a broad national coalition government with a view to the postelection situation. But with the cancelation of the general election we now find ourselves in a much more serious situation. Our anxiety concerns how to again set in motion the democratic process, which is in danger of grinding to a halt. We believe that we cannot resolve this problem on our own.

[Bertinetto] How do you explain the FIS' extraordinary gains?

[Mehri] I think that the FIS has spoken a violent language, perhaps to frighten the regime, but in practice it then suffered the effects of the renewed panic prompted in broad sectors of the population. The elections revealed two facts. There are sectors of the population that are suffering as a result of the serious socioeconomic crisis and who seek a solution to their problems in the FIS' theories. This cannot be ignored. But there are other equally broad sectors of the population who are frightened by this new emerging force; there are those who did not vote—and they are very numerous. The FLN deems it essential not to ignore either factor. It is necessary to take account both those who just want any kind of change and those who are terrified by the prospect of the FIS coming to power.

[Bertinetto] The Army has played a crucial role in the events of the past few days. It is well known that in the recent past the troops have not hesitated to fire on crowds when faced with massive protests. Are you afraid that this could happen again?

[Mehri] Our concern is precisely to avert clashes between Algerians, between the Army and the FIS or anyone else. This is our absolute priority. I do not think that the armed forces took certain steps lightly. There are major economic and social problems that must be tackled. That is all that the military is demanding. And it is up to the politicians to find ways of resolving them.

[Bertinetto] The FLN is experiencing a profound crisis. The 1990 local elections and the general election held recently and then canceled revealed the sharp fall in support for your party. Furthermore, it is deeply split. Several members of the Central Committee and of the Political Bureau itself have openly dissociated themselves from your condemnation of the present government structures. How do you view this situation?

[Mehri] The FLN's crisis stems precisely from its current transition from a single party to a party like any other. All of its problems stem from that. There is a human factor—officials accustomed to regarding relations with the government in a certain way. When some leaders say that they can understand other parties opposing the government, but not the FLN, they are revealing their conception of the party. For them the FLN is identified with the government, and they cannot even imagine it in a different position. But there have been independent ministers in the government since June.

[Bertinetto] Are you afraid that the authorities may decide to disband the FIS, or even the FLN, or all parties?

[Mehri] I have no information about that. To judge from the statements of Mohamed Boudiaf, chairman of the Higher State Council, I am inclined to conclude that there is no such desire. But certainly the idea, the thought of getting rid of the FIS and the FLN, does reside in some political forces and in the minds of some leaders. There is no specific desire—only the temptation.

[Bertinetto] Where is the real power in Algeria now?

[Mehri] The situation is too fluid, it is difficult to carry out a correct analysis now.

[Bertinetto] When will Algeria emerge from the tunnel of the crisis?

[Mehri] We cannot stay in such a situation too long.

[Bertinetto] Boudiaf is the supreme authority in the new institutional order. Do you think that he could also be the man to forge a dialogue and a compromise with the opposition?

[Mehri] Judging from his past and his recent statements, which indicate his attachment to democracy, I think that he does intend to favor dialogue and that he can therefore contribute to a positive way out of this transitional phase. What I do not know is how far the present structures can permit him to do so.

[Bertinetto] What is happening in the FIS? Will the moderates succeed in holding back those who want a jihad, or at least a violent confrontation with the government?

[Mehri] It is difficult to make forecasts. During the crucial week that we have just experienced in Algeria we have witnessed on the part of the FIS leadership a tendency toward greater realism. This may not be enough to form a final assessment, but it certainly is an encouraging development.

Ait Ahmed Insists on Need To Avoid Violence

PM2401115192 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Jan 92 p 5

[Interview with Hocine Ait Ahmed, secretary general of the Socialist Forces Front, FFS, by unidentified correspondent in Algiers; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-HAYAH] You met recently with an Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] leader, although most of your supporters are opposed to fundamentalism. What was the reason for the meeting?

[Ait Ahmed] Like the meeting that I held with National Liberation Front [FLN] leaders on the same day, that is last Thursday, that meeting had one aim, namely to avoid slipping into a position that would lead to the eruption of confrontations. With regard to the FIS, I insisted on the need to avoid any incidents after the Friday prayers. And you know the importance which the FFS attaches to civil peace. It is not enough for us to declare our adherence to democracy if we do not guarantee security. Many people have been killed in our country, and every time there are incidents, it is the civilians who pay the price.

I met Abdelkader Hachani at the residence of my friend Ben Yahya, who is entrusted with defending (FIS leader) Abbasi Medani. But I was shocked by what was said

about the two meetings, which I held openly, for they were interpreted as being designed to conclude an alliance between us—which is a distortion of reality, for states which have democratic traditions witness meetings between the greatest of political adversaries for numerous reasons. But there are people here who deliberately mix up the FIS, the FLN, and the Socialist Forces Front [FFS] to weaken this front (the FFS) first, and perhaps to justify the measures taken against it and against the FIS later.

[AL-HAYAH] But by meeting with Hachani you risked causing a shock to many of your supporters, who are glad that the FIS has not taken power.

[Ait Ahmed] I reject the astonishing methods used to mislead public opinion and to distort the truth in order to influence citizens who lack political qualifications. And everyone knows that the slogan which sums up our party's strategy is "no police state, and no fundamentalist state." And the demonstration for which I called on 2 January was the most important demonstration that the country has witnessed since independence. The aim was to prove the existence of a democratic axis that is different from the FLN and the FIS. And, since the debate I conducted on television, citizens have started to differentiate between alliances and meetings held between political parties with the aim of strengthening social peace. And when there is a party which lacks political maturity but which enjoys influence in society, we have to convince it of the need to preserve peace. [passage omitted]

[AL-HAYAH] Do you believe that Algeria is currently being subjected to a military dictatorship?

[Ait Ahmed] What has happened is a military coup designed to restructure the higher institutions of the country. This is because the presidency of the Republic has always been a center of influence for the other state institutions. [passage omitted]

[AL-HAYAH] What will be your response if the Army pursues FIS members, and do you believe that the Algerian parties will be dissolved?

[Ait Ahmed] There are no guarantees with regard to the development of the situation. And even if these guarantees are available, we will not rely on them. This is because they have lied to us on many occasions and they no longer have any credibility. And if they resort to violence against the FIS, we will not support that. We have said repeatedly in the past that there was a possibility of containing that front and dismantling it politically. We said that in June and repeated it at the meetings which the government held with the political parties. But if the present regime needs to resort to repression to strengthen its foundations, we will not permit such an approach, and we will reject violence, because that will lead the country to chaos and retreat. I hope that that problem will be resolved democratically.

[AL-HAYAH] What did you tell Hachani during your meeting with him?

[Ait Ahmed] I told him that reliance on violence is bound to lead us to a large-scale civil war. I warned him against that and urged him to control his supporters. He answered me that his front has always called for peace and that what had happened was the result of provocations by the regime's supporters. The meeting was attended by Mohamed Sa'id and Rabah Kebir (from the FIS).

Hachani told me: "The demonstration which you staged was aimed against us." So I told him that we knew what the term "fundamentalist republic" meant and that our program differed from theirs. It means that we adopt the same position toward a police state and toward an Iranian-style fundamentalist republic that relies on the method of repression, arrests, and torture.

[AL-HAYAH] And what is your opinion of the statements issued by the Iranians yesterday?

[Ait Ahmed] They support the FIS and are throwing fat in the fire. Those who support the FIS are not qualified to preach, because it is dictatorship which has generated the fundamentalist phenomenon.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you not fear the fundamentalists' assumption of power?

[Ait Ahmed] Everyone knows that we confronted and defeated them. Suffice it to say that we have rhetoric and presence. And it is the absence of an opposition that has a credibility and a genuine program that led the deprived groups to move toward the FIS. Algeria will face the threat of fundamentalism as a result of the dictatorship's return.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you expect a confrontation with the Army?

[Ait Ahmed] I do not believe that the FIS will stir up such a confrontation. This is because the commitment to calm is a strategic, not tactical, matter for it. And it does not want to give the regime any excuse to justify its dissolution. But if the regime is determined to make such a decision, its elements infiltrating the ranks are capable of stirring up provocative actions to justify that. And there is a very pressing need to avoid confrontation.

Egypt

Mubarak Sends 'Urgent' Message to 'Arafat on Talks

NC2801163892 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 28 Jan (MENA)—A responsible source at the Palestinian Embassy [as received] in Cairo today said that President Husni Mubarak has sent an urgent message to Palestinian President [as received] Yasir 'Arafat about the multilateral talks which opened in Moscow today.

The source added that Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal gave Yasir 'Arafat the message.

Sends Second Message to 'Arafat

NC2801220892 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2155 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 28 Jan (MENA)n—Palestinian Ambassador to Egypt Sa'id Kamal has said that President Husni Mubarak today sent a second urgent message to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat on the Moscow conference which opened earlier today.

President Mubarak sent a message to 'Arafat earlier today about the Moscow peace talks.

Minister Musa Urges Arabs To Attend Peace Talks

NC2501134692 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1256 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Marrakech, 25 Jan (MENA)—Egypt has emphasized that the failure to attend the peace negotiations does not serve the peace process or Arab interests. Egypt said that the peace process, whether it involves the bilateral or multilateral talks, is based on the land-for-peace principle and that this constitutes the basis of Egypt's policy.

This came in an exclusive statement that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa gave to a MENA correspondent here. The foreign minister said: Our method of confronting Israeli procrastination is to attend the peace conference and discuss with all frankness the objectives of the peace process, how far this process has come, and the impediments, particularly the Israeli measures, that are obstructing it.

In his statement, Musa said: Therefore, the failure to attend the peace negotiations does not serve the peace issue or Arab interests. But attending the negotiations and presenting viewpoints and stands with all frankness certainly would serve peace and Arab interests.

The foreign minister and his delegation are scheduled to leave Marrakech this afternoon for Moscow to lead Egypt's delegation to the multilateral talks. The delegation will include some members who had taken part in the Madrid peace conference.

'Serious Doubts' About U.S. Stand on Settlements

NC2701075392 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0608 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Excerpts] Cairo, 27 Jan (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH and AL-AKHBAR warn in their editorials today of the negative effects that Israel's settlement policy is having on the peace talks, especially on the eve of the Moscow multilateral talks due to begin 28 January. [passage omitted]

AL-AKHBAR expressed concern over statements aired after the meeting between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Israeli Ambassador Za'man Shoval on the loan issue.

While the U.S. Administration previously declared that it would not grant Israel loans before ensuring that they stop building settlements, the statements broadcast yesterday after the Baker-Shoval meeting arouse serious doubts about the U.S. stand.

Israeli radio announced that the U.S. secretary of state proposed to the Israeli ambassador that Tel Aviv finish building around 12,000 housing units currently under construction on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, after which settlement-building should cease.

AL-AKHBAR adds: If this is true, this report means the U.S. Government has no objections to Israel building thousands of new settlements in the territories, which are the core of negotiations. At the same time, Washington says that the settlements block peace.

The newspaper demands a clarification from U.S. President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker over this strange stand, which comes at an embarrassing time—on the eve of the Moscow multilaterals—and which obscures the intentions of certain parties, despite their apparent plan to continue efforts until the desired peace is realized.

Muslim Brotherhood Condemns Algerian 'Coup'

NC2401184392 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Jan 92 p 5

[Statement issued by the Muslim Brotherhood; date and place not given]

[Text] And those who strive in our cause, we will certainly guide them to our paths; for verily God is with those who do right. [Koranic verse]

Ever since the light of Islamic resurgence shone in Muslim lands, its enemies have been lying in wait, ready to attack it from all sides because they know that it is the spirit of righteousness that fills that hearts of the faithful and the minds and feelings of Muslims. This spirit infuses a new life into Muslims and restores to them their pride, dignity, independence, and liberty. The enemies accuse Islam and Muslims of backwardness and narrowness, describing them as extremists and terrorists while they, at the same time, kill Muslims, execute those who preach the Islamic call, and cast the advocates of Islam into dungeons and detention centers. Their intention is to extinguish God's light. But God will complete the revelation of His light, even though the unbelievers may detest it. [Koranic verse]

Ever since Islam grew strong in fraternal Algeria, voices have been raised in Europe, America, and the usurping Zionist entity in Palestine about the consequences if the "fundamentalists" ever came close to assuming power

and to establishing a Muslim state. They saw an impending danger to foreign influence in the Islamic Arab Maghreb and among its rulers. Additionally, such an awakening and such a state would be a source of support for Muslim strugglers in the Middle East and elsewhere.

With the help of the Algerian people's resolve to struggle and make sacrifices and President Chadli Bendjedid's firmness, Algeria was transferred from the repression of the corrupt and despotic rule of the regime's party to a condition of liberty, where the people's right to free expression and self-determination was respected. The process of democracy and freedom progressed, and the first round of general legislative elections was held quietly, freely, honestly, and in an orderly fashion. There were no security problems. No one seriously questioned the results. As soon as the results appeared it became clear that the Islamic call represented the unanimous wish of the faithful and free Algerian people; that they had publicly expressed their wish and determination not to accept any creed, law, or government other than Islam; and that this was about to become an inevitable reality. As soon as the election results became clear, the pillars of falsehood shook and the countries, authorities, and rulers of inequity conspired to trap the Algerian people and return them—by means of oppression, injustice, tanks and guns—to despotic rule and to distance them from true Islam. Thus a coup was planned and carried out by a small group of people opposed to the people's unanimous wish, benefiting from the hateful autocratic rule and linked to resentful international parties.

They used the Army to force President Bendjedid to resign so that they could seize power, annul the elections, and suspend the Constitution. In doing this, they disregarded the possible consequences of this action, including a civil war in which Algerian blood would be shed and innocent people would die. They disregarded the free will of a nation of strugglers that offered a million martyrs to attain independence and as a price for its liberty. This nation subsequently offered many hundreds of other martyrs in successive uprisings. This nation will not surrender or be subdued.

We strongly denounce this conspiracy and treason against the Algerian people, indeed against Islam and Islamic nations in general.

Liberty and self-determination have become indisputable principles. Some rulers, however, regrettably continue to claim that they are the ones who understand the people's interests and that the people are immature and need to be guided. They disregard the people's will and opinions and pretend they are not doing so. The faithful must resist such custodianship, oppose such despotism, and close ranks in order to eliminate it.

We exhort the group who seized power in Algeria to reconsider and to refrain from denying their own identity and opposing the unanimous desires of the people. We urge them to help prevent the shedding of Algerian blood and to allow matters in their dear and struggling country to proceed normally. We call for the unity of ranks and views and for the Algerian people's right to choose their rulers and handle their own interests.

We call on the Muslims of the world, indeed on all free people in the world, to support the Algerian people against this vicious onslaught which seeks to destroy their rights, liberty, resources, hopes, and ambitions.

Muslims worldwide have a duty to support the Algerian people in their ordeal.

God hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs is the garden of paradise. [Koranic verse]

We pray to God Almighty to spare Algeria the conspirators' evil and the scheming of haters, to guide the steps of the sincere people, and grant success to those who work for Islam. God alone can bring Algeria safely out of this dangerous crisis.

God has decreed: It is I and my apostles who must prevail, for God is one full of strength, able to enforce His will. [Koranic verse]

God be praised. God's prayer and peace be with His prophet. God is great; God be praised.

[Dated] 10 Rajab, 1412 of the Hegira, corresponding to 15 January 1992

[Signed] Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood

* Further on Regime's 'Treason'

92P40104A Paris LE MONDE in French
18 Jan 92 p 3

[Text] The Muslim Brotherhood has termed the latest developments in Algeria as "treason against the Algerian people, the Muslim people, and Islam." In a communique distributed 15 January, their supreme leader urged "the group that has seized power to come to its senses... to avoid bloodshed" and called on "all Muslims of the world to support the Algerian people against the raid, which deprived the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] of a certain electoral victory."

The reaction of AL-SHA'B, organ of the working Socialist Party (Islamist), was still more violent. "We will not allow the heroes of the FIS and consequently the Algerian people to fight for their freedom alone. (...) May the curse of Allah be on us if, as in the past, we refrain from joining this Arab and Islamic battle."

The Islamic weekly AL-NUR states that "democracy has revealed the ugliness of its face after the victory of the Islamists in Algeria. (...) All the masks of alleged democracy, freedom, and the rights of man have now fallen to

reveal the hatred of the secularists for everything that is Islamic." It then concludes that the only way to power is "the Islamic way."

Measures Required Against Iraq's Holding Prisoners

NC2501121592 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 23 Jan 92 p 5

[Editorial: "Appeals Are Not Enough for Such Sick Mentalities"]

[Text] The World Islamic Conference held in Kuwait concluded its meetings by declaring the position of world Muslims which incriminates Iraqi dictator Saddam Husayn and warms him of further disasters and destruction should he continue to detain thousands of Kuwaiti prisoners without any legal or humane justification. Despite the strength of the statement issued at the end of the conference, we do not believe that this creature, who is alien to the entire human race, will care to respond to it if the Arab and Islamic worlds are only satisfied with making appeals to a person who is still living under the illusion that he was victorious against an international alliance of 29 states led by the strongest and most advanced country.

World public opinion in general, and Arab public opinion in particular, are asking in astonishment what the secret is behind Saddam Husayn insisting on holding this large number of Kuwaiti prisoners even after he and his troops have been driven out of Kuwait in humiliation and disgrace and after this Arab country has slipped through his fingers. There is no doubt that any attempt to find out this secret will be unsuccessful if it relies on rational or logical analysis. This is because the subject concerns one who has a sick and devious mentality that requires the greatest psychologists and criminologists to explore its depths. In brief, all that can be said is that this person, with such a mentality, takes pleasure and even ecstasy in causing the greatest amount of grief to those he perceives as enemies. He also clings to his mistaken stands with extreme obstinacy to satisfy some feelings hidden deep in his heart.

There is no doubt that mere conferences and statements of denunciation and incrimination will not affect a creature with such apathy. Therefore, stronger, firmer measures, such as the Security Council resolutions imposing international sanctions against Iraq, must be taken to compel him to honor international principles and laws. At the same time, the Arab League must have a decisive and effective role in forcing the Baghdad regime to free those thousands of Arabs and threatening to sever the Arab countries' relations with this regime or to expel it from this organization, which is required to defend the rights and interests of its members through all means.

Delegation Returns From CIS Visit

NC2601191992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1840 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 26 Jan (MENA)—The Egyptian delegation led by Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning, returned to Cairo from Moscow this evening after visiting a number of republics in the new Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS].

During the tour the delegation visited the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, and Ukraine and conveyed messages to the heads of states from President Husni Mubarak.

Diplomatic Relations Established With Ukraine

NC2501135692 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Kiev, 25 Jan (MENA)—The Egyptian and Ukrainian Governments have agreed to exchange diplomatic representation at the ambassadorial level.

This came in a joint statement issued today in Kiev and signed by Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning, and Anatoliy Zlenko, Ukrainian foreign minister.

The statement says that proceeding from their mutual desire to promote the traditional friendship and cooperation between the two states and peoples in the political, trade, economic, and other fields, the Egyptian and Ukrainian Governments have decided to establish diplomatic relations effective from the date of this statement and to exchange diplomatic missions at the ambassadorial level.

The Republic of Ukraine is the second-largest—after the Russian Federation—of the republics which formed the Soviet Union. Ukraine's population is approximately 51.7 million. It is one of the four republics which possess nuclear weapons and which have great industrial and agricultural potential.

Mauritania

Supreme Court Announces Final Election Results

LD2901010592 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 0010 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Excerpts] Supreme Court President Mohamed Ould Lambirik a short time ago announced the final results of the presidential election that took place last Friday. The announcement took place in the presence of ballot collection personnel and national press representatives.

As you heard from our live relay of the announcement of the final results from the Justice Palace, last Friday's voting resulted in the victory of Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, president of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. He won the voters' trust with 62.65 percent of the vote. National radio extends its congratulations to

Mr. Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya. Here are the final results of the presidential elections announced tonight by Supreme Court President Mohamed Ould Lambirik:

[Begin Lambirik recording] [Passage omitted] I would like to announce that the Supreme Court has approved the following results:

Number of registered voters: 1,083,892; number of voters: 560,796; number of void votes: 9,221; number of votes cast: 551,575; number of neutral votes: 2,093.

The candidates have gained the following results: Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya: 345,593, i.e. 62.65 percent; Ahmed Ould Daddah: 180,658, i.e. 32.75 percent; Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Oumah: 7,506, i.e. 1.36 percent; Mustapha Ould Mohamed Salek: 15,735, i.e. 2.85 percent.

Therefore, I would like to announce the election of Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya as president of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania because he won an absolute majority of votes during the first round of elections, represented by 62.65 percent of the votes cast during the elections that took place on 24 January 1992. God grants success. [end recording]

Official Denies Freedom of Assembly Suspended

AB2801175492 Paris AFP in French 1628 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Nouakchott, 28 Jan (AFP)—Sidi Ould Leghdaf, director of political affairs and public liberties at the Mauritanian Ministry of Interior, today denied opposition reports stating that the right to hold meetings has been suspended in Mauritania.

He told AFP that he has never summoned leaders of the leading opposition political party, the Union of Democratic Forces (UFD), to inform them of any such decision, and that he will sue this party, he went on, for "forgery and lies against my person."

The UFD, which held a news conference in Nouakchott this morning, had stated in connection with this issue that the "democratic process in Mauritania could be considered as having broken down."

Directives Announce Legislative Elections

AB2901120092 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in French 0730 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The Ministry of Interior, Post, and Telecommunications informs all party-affiliated or independent candidates that the deadline for the submission of candidate lists for the legislative elections is Tuesday, 4 February, at midnight.

The final lists of the various candidates will be published by the administrative commissions on Sunday, 9 February, and the launching of the electoral campaign is set for 14 February. All candidates are therefore called upon to respect the deadline.

UFD To Boycott Elections

AB2801163892 Paris AFP in French 1345 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Nouakchott, 28 Jan (AFP)—The Mauritanian opposition plans to boycott the continuation of the democratic process, especially the legislative elections, it was learned today in Nouakchott.

"We do not accept participation in this comedy; falsification has limits," declared officials of the Union of Democratic Forces (UFD - the major party in the opposition), which held a news conference today. Party Secretary General Messaoud Ould Boulkheir added that in Mauritania, "there is no democracy, and the only thing that exists is the determination of the regime to perpetuate itself by all means."

The results of the 24 January presidential elections, which have not yet been published, have given more than 62 percent of the vote to the incumbent president, Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

The opposition is also of the opinion that the suspension of the freedoms of meeting, demonstration, and of public gathering which was announced yesterday amounts to the interruption of political life, hence of the democratic process. "It does not seem possible to me to continue," declared one of the opposition leaders who also explained that the decision to boycott the rest of the democratization process had not yet been made by the party's top-ranking bodies.

The UFD, which asserts that all its leaders have been arrested in Nouadhibou, the country's second city, today sent its first coordinator, Mohameden Ould Babah, to this port city in the west of the country.

The UFD spoke of the death of several of its members during the intervention by law enforcement agents on 26 January near its campaign headquarters in this city. The UFD adds that about 160 people have been arrested in this city, while other arrests were made in Kaedi, in the south of the country.

The opposition members explain that the total number of dead could rise to 10, whereas for the moment, the official count released in a communique says that two people "suffocated and died of their injuries." According to the opposition, three of the dead were yesterday already delivered to their families in Nouadhibou.

Ould Boulkheir, traditional leader of the el-Hor Movement (the party of the haratines, or former slaves), also protested the "selections" made by the forces of law and order during the "repression and arrest operation." According to him, black Mauritanians "are targeted more than those of Arab origin" in the repression.

The UFD speaks of its willingness "to use democratic weapons." "We are against violence and disorder," added the leaders of the UDF, which they described as

"the only credible party," saying that the other parties which were created in Mauritania are "just camouflage."

FLAM Reaffirms Fight Against President Taya

AB2901080092 Paris AFP in French 1119 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Dakar, 26 Jan (AFP)—The African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (FLAM, the armed opposition) have said that "dialogue was impossible" with President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and that they will continue to "fight him with all means" following the victory of the incumbent president, who reportedly won about 61 percent of the vote during the 24 January presidential elections, according to the last unofficial results.

In a communique sent to the press today, the FLAM said that they "are forced to fight (the president) with all means for the advent of democracy in Mauritania." They think that Colonel Ould Taya's election "merely confirmed that the dice were loaded in advance" and that the democratic process initiated in Mauritania "did not meet all the conditions of openness required for a healthy, loyal, and unbiased competition."

According to the opposition movement, the fact that a transition government has not been set up and the opposition not involved with creating the electoral laws contributed to "widespread fraudulent maneuvers" to the benefit of President Taya.

The communique also denounced the acts of "intimidation," "corruption," as well as obstacles encountered by black Africans and the haratines (former slaves) in registering for the elections and concerning the distribution of electoral cards to Malian Tuaregs who have sought refuge in Mauritania.

The FLAM had suspended their armed struggle last July following the restoration of the democratic process in Mauritania, but it refused to take part in the process, requesting as a prerequisite the return of deported people and exiles, the reinstatement of dismissed civil servants, the opening of an investigation into the executions of black Africans, and the holding of a national conference. On 15 January, however, it announced its decision to resume armed struggle against the Mauritanian regime.

Tunisia

Reportage on RCD Central Committee Session

Prime Minister: Al-Nahdah 'Conspiracy' Overcome

LD2501145292 [Editorial Report]

[Editorial Report] Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic at 1300 GMT on 25 January broadcasts a six-minute report on Prime Minister Karoui chairing the opening of the sixth ordinary session of the Democratic Constitutional Rally [RCD] Central Committee. The Rally's secretary general and members of the Political Bureau attended.

In his speech Karoui reaffirms the important role of the Central Committee owing to the fact that it follows up the political and development march in the country proceeding from the premise that the Rally is the party which is in power, the radio says. He notes that the current meeting has been convened in special circumstances distinguished by significant changes at the national and regional levels and even at the international level which require frank discussion and deep dialogue. He points out that among the important issues which the meeting will study and debate is the eighth economic and social development plan, and he states that the committee will also look into the general situation in the country, which is distinguished by stability and security.

The radio continues: He noted that the country during the past months was able to overcome and abort the conspiracy which was planned by the terrorist group, the so-called Al-Nahdah Movement, thanks to the total vigilance of the security personnel and the fact that all members of the Rally and all factions of the Tunisian people are committed to the defense of the homeland's gains and the achievements that came about as a result of the change.

Karoui then states that the current meeting will be an occasion to study the critical situation in the Maghreb region.

Ben Ali Addresses Final Session

LD2701145692 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Speech by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to conclude the sixth session of the Democratic Constitutional Rally Central Committee on 27 January; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O strugglers, men and women. I welcome you today on the occasion of the conclusion of the proceedings of the sixth session of the Central Committee of the Democratic Constitutional Rally.

It is my pleasure to express to you my satisfaction at the debate on the structures of the RCD and on the political, economic, and social spheres, whose principles and orientations have been put forth by the RCD and which are drawing the interest of society at this critical phase of Tunisian history. [passage omitted]

Women, who were given a special position and made important gains, are in need of more efforts to entrench their rights and develop their political and social activities. [applause] To achieve this aim, we have directed a committee to study the development of these rights. To consolidate the presence of women in all the structures of the RCD, and to ease the shouldering of their responsibilities within it, we have decided to create the post of a permanent

secretary for the RCD [applause], which will be in charge of women's affairs and their activities in the RCD. [passage omitted]

Strugglers, we have constantly stood by our Palestinian brothers by supporting their choices and cause. When the PLO and most of the Arab countries decided to adopt the peace option, we were among those who supported this course. We also responded to the call of our Palestinian brothers to attend the Madrid peace conference.

As Tunisia today participates in the coming round of these talks which will be held in Moscow, it remains loyal to its policy of calling for the solution of the international questions by peaceful means and through negotiations, and to its unwavering commitment to support the struggling Palestinian people and their just cause and its readiness to do all that can further this cause and the cause of peace.

We will use our presence to serve justice and peace and to defend the Arab viewpoint, hoping that the international community will exert all pressure to persuade Israel to respond to the call of the entire world and restore the usurped rights to their owners in accordance with international legitimacy, which Tunisia was among the first to advocate and call for.

I have previously explained Tunisia's position toward the recent events in fraternal Algeria.

I have also explained Tunisia's concern and efforts to see a peaceful solution found for the conflict between the Jamahiriyah and some Western countries in a way that accords with international law and which safeguards peace and stability in the region.

We still hope that reason and justice will prevail in regard to this cause. However, the duty and the country's interests demand vigilance and caution in the face of any repercussions that might result.

You and all RCD cadres are called upon to intensify contacts with citizens to acquaint them with all new developments and the government's position and efforts, while explaining to them at the same time the soundness of our way in dealing with all issues and the soundness of our choices in the political, economic, and social fields and the great achievements we are making on the road of comprensive development. [applause]

This is not a hard task. The RCD has constantly presented an overwhelming ability to keep abreast with and to lead social development thanks to its wide-ranging cells and cadres, the credibility of its dealing with citizens' concerns and the country's causes, the realism of its programs and ambitions, and the language of persuasion and the dialogue it pursues. [passage omitted]

President Ben Ali Appoints Women Officials

LD2801140692 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] The official spokesman of the presidency has announced that the head of state has decided to appoint Mrs. Chedlia Boukhachina as [the first woman] adviser to the president.

President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali met this morning with Chedli Neffeti, secretary general of the Democratic Constitutional Rally. During the audience, the president reiterated his pleasure at the atmosphere that prevailed at the meetings of the rally's Central Committee and the results of that meeting, saying that they had strengthened the Rally's activities and bolstered its march forward.

The president of the Rally has decided to appoint Nabiha Zarrouk permanent secretary in charge of women's affairs in the party.

Ben Ali, Defense Minister Discuss Army Activities

LD2501184692 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] The national Army's participation in various fields of development and the coordination of the Army's help in bolstering economic development were the main topics of a discussion between President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and National Defense Minister Abdelaziz Ben Dhia.

The president reaffirmed the need for bolstering these efforts, particularly in regard to the infrastructure in the remote regions.

The defense minister acquainted the president with the draft law on military conscription pertaining to students in higher education in certain fields such as medical specialities, dentistry, and pharmaceutical sciences, with a view to enabling them to defer national military service until after age 28 so that they can continue their studies.

President Ben Ali Receives Saudi Foreign Minister

LD2401230592 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] Today in Carthage Palace President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal in the presence of Foreign Minister Habib Benyahia and Saudi Ambassador to Tunis Ibrahim S'ad Ibrahim.

Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said he was honored to meet the president, and he delivered to him a written reply from his brother, King Fahd Bin-Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, explaining that the present conditions require further coordination and consultation between the leaderships of the two fraternal countries.

He said: We have discussed many issues, and I am happy that the views of his excellency the president and the custodian of the two holy mosques are in agreement. We hope to develop cooperation between the two countries in the interests of the Arab and Islamic nations.

Ba'th Official Executed on Saddam's Orders

LD2901114392 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq [SAIRI] announced: There was recently a heavy clash between the popular forces and the Iraqi military near al-Basrah which lasted for 11 hours and which ended with the Ba'thist forces sustaining heavy casualties.

SAIRI said that the popular forces were very successful in the operation and described it as a response to the Iraqi Armed Forces' repeated bombardment of southern Iraq.

Citing informed sources, IRNA reports: 'Abd al-Husayn Rahi, a member of the Ba'th party leadership, was yesterday executed on Saddam's orders.

Syria 'Godfather' of Moscow Talks 'Farce'

JN2701131792 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1048 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Jan (INA)—AL-THAWRAH says that whether or not the Syrian regime participates in the Moscow party, it will remain the godfather of this farce. In an article published today, the newspaper says that the excuses propagated by the Syrian regime for its intention not to participate in the Moscow talks will not convince or deceive anybody. That regime is deluding itself, because the entire world is aware of the reality of its position on this capitulatory process. This regime's agreement to the U.S. plan paved the way for the Madrid conference, and then for the Washington meetings, which, until now, have not produced anything positive, as that regime itself is saying.

AL-THAWRAH notes that the Zionist position did not change after the Madrid conference and the Washington meetings. The Syrian regime as well as the entire world know this. So, on what basis did it agree to participate in this process from the beginning?

The paper asks: Did the Syrian regime imagine that the Zionists would change their declared and firm positions simply by its delegation meeting in Washington with the Zionist delegation and that they would announce their withdrawal from the Golan and the other occupied Arab territory? Or, is that regime still working to kill the Arab spirit which rejects the Zionist presence and negotiations with it?

Did America make any promises to that regime before the beginning of the talks, and has it now gone back on these promises? Or, does its nonattendance of the Moscow celebrations fall within the framework of an agreement concluded between that regime and the U.S. Administration?

Is this the awakening of its conscience? If so, it should withdraw from the entire process and act in a way that completely contradicts all its treasonous actions. This cannot be taken into consideration. Is this another conspiratorial plan through which that regime is trying to facilitate the Moscow conference? We shall have to wait and see the dimensions of this conspiracy.

Saudi Minister's Meeting With U.S. Jew Scored

JN2601182592 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 24 Jan 92 p 2

[Article by "Observer": "The Same Objective, the Same Master"]

[Text] At last Henry Sigmund has been warmly received in the holy Islamic land.

While the entire world stood watching, Sa'ud al-Faysal bowed his head when Sigmund voiced displeasure with the Kingdom because at the United Nations it voted against the abrogation of the UN General Assembly resolution which terms Zionism as one form of racism. Al-Faysal politely apologized, vowing never to repeat such a thing in the future, and he explained that the Kingdom's action was motivated by the fact that Fahd would have faced political problems had he not done so. This means that the Kingdom's vote had taken place under duress and that it was not the embodiment of an honorable stand in the Palestinians' interest.

Sigmund, who is an important figure in the U.S. Jewish lobby, has been accorded, as he himself stated, a warm welcome which made him feel as if he were among his kinfolk and at home, as one of the godfathers of the settlement, Saudi Ambassador in Washington Bandar Bin-Sultan, had predicted he would feel when he met with him before he began the visit.

What is important here is that the Zionist guests of Riyadh have fulfilled a greatly cherished dream that is commensurate with the great joy they felt when the Saudi rulers met with Bush to arrange for the aggression against Iraq and when they financed all the chapters of the aggression against the Iraqi people, such as the preparations for the aggression, the support they gave to the implementation of this aggression, and the material cover they provided for the sequence of black events that followed and that seem to be continuing.

Things have not changed. Cheney's meeting with Fahd was the first step in a plan to deal a blow to Iraq's potential, which endangers the Zionist entity. Sigmund's presence in Riyadh is another step whose objective is to normalize relations and open the door to Israeli goods. Therefore, it is not surprising that as Cheney had met with Husni after he left Saudi Arabia, Sigmund would also meet with Husni after he leaves Riyadh.

Everyone agrees about how to interpret the cordial relations between the Saudis and the Zionists. They all are part of the same plan and receive preferential treatment from the same master. Not a single one of them will tarry in carrying out his role in the scheme of aggression against Iraq.

Therefore, the objective is the same, and what is important is that the master is the same.

Shamir Favors Leahy Proposal on Loan Guarantees

TA2901093992 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 29 Jan 92 pp 1, 5

[Report by Avi Temkin]

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will try to convince the U.S. Administration to accept the formula suggested by Senator Patrick Leahy, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, as the final compromise on the loan guarantees for immigrant absorption and to abandon the formula of freezing future building in the territories. Under the Leahy formula, whatever Israel spends on settlements will be deducted from the loan guarantees, but there will not be a building freeze. In talks conducted so far with the Americans, the administration has referred to 9,300 apartments as the number Israel will be able to complete before the freeze goes into effect because they were started in 1991. According to Israeli Government evaluations, of the 9,300 apartments, only some 6,300 still have to be completed, and most will be finished by late 1992.

Government sources said that Shamir has serious problems with the strong opposition to the Baker formula; therefore, he is trying to reach a compromise with which, in his view, the Americans will be able to live.

Shamir will point to the fact that if the amount spent on building in the settlements is deducted from the loan guarantees it would permit President Bush to say that no U.S. money was funding settlement building either directly or indirectly. Such a compromise would permit the two sides to continue to abide by their principles, Shamir believes.

The senior Treasury echelon, headed by Director General Shalom Zinger, is working on a document which contains all the reforms carried out in the Israeli economy since the mid-1980's with the aim of showing the U.S. Congress that contrary to impressions, many reforms have been implemented in recent years.

16 Mobile Homes on Hill 510 Not 'New Settlement'

TA2901085092 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Sixteen mobile homes are now being installed on a Samaria site known as Hill 510, north of the settlement of Qedumim. Our correspondent in the territories Udi Segal reports that the yeshiva of Qedumim will move to this site. The yeshiva principal told our correspondent that this is not a new settlement and that the plan to move the mobile homes to the hill had been approved many months ago, but the implementation was delayed because of stormy weather.

Settler 'Standby' Units Set Up To Assist IDF

TA2901102492 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Jan 92 p A1

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[Text] Settler standby units, designed to assist the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] after terrorist attacks, have been set up on the instruction of Central Command Commander Dani Yatom. The defense minister and the chief of staff have been apprised of Yatom's recently introduced enterprise. Also, Yatom yesterday signed an order approving the establishment of civil defense in West Bank settlements.

Military elements have said that most of the settlers who are committed to periodic reserve service have been recruited into territorial defense units, which have been set up in the West Bank. These units' operation is conducted along lines similar to that of territorial defense forces along the borders with Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.

In recent weeks, the Central Command has set up standby units composed of settler reservists. The units will be put in action when deemed necessary by brigade commanders. The objective is to use the units to ensure the security of settlements and of the surrounding area. The new standby units have already participated in training, although they have not been alerted to real-time action because no terrorist attacks have been perpetrated in the West Bank since their establishment.

The military elements explained that the IDF is often required to set up many roadblocks, mainly when attackers are being hunted. According to the plan, brigade commanders will use territorial command officers to forward passwords designed to call up the unit. The members of every unit, which is composed of 10 to 15 reservists, will have to arrive at a gathering spot then leave for a prearranged location along one of the roads, where they are to stop every passing vehicle. One of the settlers will be the standby unit commander, and he will command the unit in action.

IDF sources stress that from the moment of recruitment, the standby units personnel will be ordinary reservists subject to military law, discipline, and command. The Central Command commander expressed the hope that if, God forbid, the IDF requires the assistance of the standby units, their performance will be the best possible. Military elements noted that West Bank settlement leaders warmly welcomed Yatom's plan.

Yesterday the Central Command commander signed an order endorsing the establishment of a civil defense in West Bank settlements. The order allows the settlers to carry arms within their settlement's boundaries only. IDF sources stressed that if civil defense personnel leave the premises, they will be dealt with in accordance with the law. It is believed that several civil defense points will soon be established in the West Bank, now that the order has been signed.

Other settler units initiated by Major General Yatom, dubbed the "mortar teams," have recently started operating. These units are supposed to shoot flares at the site of a terrorist attack, whenever instructed to do so by an Army commander. One of these teams operated at the terrorist attack site near the village of 'Ayn Siniya two weeks ago.

Arens Tours Lebanon Border, Meets Lahd

TA2801195792 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens toured Israel's northern border today and took part in a debriefing on the incident in south Lebanon two days ago in which an Israeli soldier was killed and another was wounded. He also conferred with General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army, who reviewed the situation in Lebanon in light of the political negotiations and the state of security in south Lebanon.

Minister Arens pointed out that Lebanon is being dragged after Syria and, just like it, did not report to the peace talks in Moscow. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that in Mr. Arens's opinion an arrangement will not be reached with Lebanon because Syria does not want to reach a peace arrangement.

'Terrorists' Killed in Clash Handed To Hizballah

TA2801194492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] The bodies of two Arab terrorists killed in a clash with the Israel Army in southern Lebanon were today transferred by the International Red Cross to the Hizballah organization.

It now emerges that two terrorists, and not three, were killed in the incident on Sunday. A third was badly wounded and taken to hospital in Tyre. An Israeli soldier, Sergeant 'Ofer Eliyahu, died in the clash.

FRG Firms Said Aiding Iran's Nuclear Program

TA2801173492 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Jan 92 p A1

[Report by Ze'ev Schiff]

[Text] European firms, mainly German, which had helped Iraq build its chemical warfare industries and nuclear program are repeating their past deeds and have begun helping Iran in the same fields in exchange for huge sums of money. The United States and Israel take a very serious view of this affair. U.S and Israeli officials have already raised the issue with German Government representatives.

After the Gulf war, Tehran launched a broad five-year plan to reorganize its army and outfit it with modern weapons. As part of this program, Iran also increased its chemical weapons production. Iran's top leaders were not of one mind about the development of nuclear weapons. During the Shah's rule Iran purchased several nuclear reactors, but their installation stopped due to the Iran- Iraq war. Upon Khomeyni's rise to power, Iran embraced the approach that it did not need nuclear weapons, but this has apparently changed now. In view of the findings of the UN inspection teams in Iraq, Iran is now making efforts to develop its nuclear capability, and some of its leaders have even made statements to that effect.

Since the end of the Gulf war, German and other European firms have been rushing to fill the void. Their assistance is primarily in all chemical fields, but there are signs of their future involvement in nuclear matters.

That is made easier by the fact that no serious measures were taken against them for their contribution to Iraq's arms industry, particularly in the field of chemical weapons. The names of the firms were discovered in the documents seized in Iraq, but for some reason they were not published by the UN special committee overseeing Iraq's disarmament. The firms apparently do not consider the risks too big when compared to the hefty profits they expect to reap from the Iranian Government.

The names of the firms are known to the U.S. Administration and to Israel. The issue has been raised with German Government officials, and various countermeasures should be expected.

Nuclear Capability Predicted by Decade's End

TA2901083092 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 29 Jan 92 p 12

[By Arye Egozi]

[Text] Military sources said yesterday in Tel Aviv that Iran is liable to attain nuclear capability by the end of the decade. The sources further stated that the Iranians are developing long- range missiles which will be capable of bearing nuclear warheads.

The sources said that the Iranians are currently immersed in a military buildup process which was launched as soon as the war against Iraq ended. In addition to an annual $6-billion defense budget, Iran has been investing $2 billion a year in military procurement.

According to the sources, Iran has received approximately 300 older Scud-B missiles since the end of its war against Iraq, and at present, it is purchasing the newest Scud-C model, which is also manufactured by North Korea.

The sources stressed that although Iran is only starting out on the path toward nuclear capability, it is trying to purchase technology and expertise from every possible source. "This effort is reminiscent of the Iraqi attempts in this sphere. The Iraqis are maintaining contacts with European—including German—companies," said the sources, refusing to name the companies.

The military sources further said that they have no proof that scientists from one of the former USSR republics are in Iran to assist the Iranian nuclear development efforts. They added, however, that the Iranians have been attempting to attain cooperation in various fields with the Islamic republics of the former USSR.

Night Curfew on Ramallah, al-Birah To End 11 Feb

TA2901055092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] The night curfew on the twin towns of Ramallah and al- Birah is to be lifted on February 11, instead of at the end of the month. That was the decision of the High Court of Justice in response to a petition submitted by a group of Christian ministers, Jewish rabbis, and a Muslim shaykh.

The court agreed to reduce the curfew in view of the forthcoming Christian Orthodox Christmas celebrations.

King To Undergo 'Minor Operation'

JN2901141192 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The Royal Hashemite Court's press spokesman has announced that His Majesty King Husayn, may God protect him, will be admitted to the King Husayn Medical Center this evening to undergo a minor operation on his right leg, and that he will only have to stay in the hospital for 24 hours, God willing.

Announcing this, the Royal Hashemite Court beseeches God to protect his majesty the king, to grant him good health, and to keep him as a father, brother, and leader for all sons of his one family.

King Husayn Interviewed on Peace Process

PM2801122492 Paris LE FIGARO in French 27 Jan 92 p 4

[Interview with King Husayn of Jordan by Claude Lorieux in Amman—date not given]

[Text] [Lorieux] Will the political crisis which has just arisen in Israel derail the Near East peace process?

[Husayn] Any obstacle, any delay to the process which gives us the chance to remove the fundamental causes of instability in the region—namely the Palestinian and Israeli-Arab problems—is not in anyone's interest. It is possible that this opportunity may never arise again.

I cannot imagine the Near East swimming against the tide of the rest of the world where people are striving to solve the problems affecting people, their future, and the stability of the region in which they live. Some people are frightened. They are wrong. We should instead be afraid of what would happen if we fail to achieve a real and comprehensive peace.

[Lorieux] Attacks on Israeli civilians and buses have increased recently in the occupied territories. What can the Palestinians gain from moving from stone throwing to knife or gun attacks?

[Husayn] The Palestinians threw stones out of despair. Their living conditions have been impossible for years. They want to attract the world's attention. The majority of them want the negotiations started in Madrid and Washington to give them the right to live on their territory in peace and dignity. They are dreaming of a new dawn which will end the long night into which they have been plunged.

There may be a minority who want to scuttle all peace efforts. This minority exists on both sides of the line (which separates Jews and Arabs—LE FIGARO editor's note). But we must not allow this minority to achieve their ends even if, as was foreseen from the start of the peace process, really tragic events occur.

[Lorieux] With a few months to go before the presidential election in the United States, this escalation is nonetheless likely to have a negative effect on U.S. public opinion.

[Husayn] That is unfortunate. But I do not think that all the Palestinians should have to bear responsibility for these incidents. These attacks are probably the work of individuals or small isolated groups; and the same could be said of the other camp.

[Lorieux] Will Jordan participate in the multilateral peace conference which will open in Moscow while Syria, Lebanon, and perhaps the Palestinians are boycotting it?

[Husayn] It is worth going to Moscow. I would like Jordan to be represented there in an independent way. Indeed, I think that these multilateral negotiations will be a more important event even than the international Near East peace conference which we have demanded for years and years.

What counts is not so much the two or three days which the Moscow meeting will last, as the impetus it will give. This is not a substitute for bilateral negotiations. It is a complementary approach which offers an opportunity to handle major problems which have not been tackled in the bilateral talks.

[Lorieux] What is necessary for complete peace to be established in the Near East?

[Husayn] We must examine the fate of the Palestinians in the diaspora. I do not mean the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza who fled in 1967, but the Palestinians who left when the problem first arose (in 1948, when the Israeli state was created—LE FIGARO editor's note). We must discuss their right to return home or to be compensated. On their side, the Israelis will perhaps discuss the fate of their compatriots who are from Arab countries and who, in some cases, would like to be able to return there.

There will be many other issues to discuss—water, arms control, ecology, the economy, human rights, and so forth. We must also discuss Jerusalem, the holy city. Jerusalem belongs to the faithful of the three monotheistic religions and should be a symbol for all.

[Lorieux] But you have not persuaded Syria to send a delegation to Moscow?

[Husayn] We tried, without success, it is true. But we do not know what Syria's final position will be. In the past it has been late in turning a corner which others negotiated before. For instance, Damascus rejected Security Council Resolution 242 for years (which establishes the principle of exchanging the territories conquered by Israel in 1967 for peace—LE FIGARO editor's note). It then changed its mind.

Syria is a very important protagonist in the region. We hope that it will change its stance this time too. Lebanon

is clearly very interested in multilateral negotiations. We would like the Palestinians as such to attend the conference, and for the Palestinians of the diaspora to be represented in Moscow.

[Lorieux] Will Jordan nonetheless attend the Moscow multilateral talks?

[Husayn] Jordan has said that it would participate. If the conference takes place, I think it will be present.

[LE FIGARO] Are you not afraid that a world dominated by just one superpower—the United States as it happens—may prove dangerous?

[Husayn] It will provide new opportunities and new challenges, but also new dangers, at least until the situation is stabilized. But in general, we have all realized that the world is our common home and that it is in our interests to work together to make it better. I hope that we are not entering an era in which some states would like to dominate others.

[LE FIGARO] The failure of the recent Islamic summit in Dakar confirmed the Arab world's divisions. Are they not the result of Kuwait's invasion by Saddam Husayn?

[Husayn] First let me remind you that we opposed the unfortunate invasion of Kuwait for the good reason that we have always opposed the conquest of territories by force. We supported Resolution 242 (adopted after Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza—LE FIGARO editor's note), and those on the invasion of Cyprus (by Turkey—LE FIGARO editor's note), and the Malvinas (by Argentina—LE FIGARO editor's note).

The situation which prevails in the Arab and Muslim world may reflect the views of some leaders, but not the feelings of the peoples. The peoples are very disappointed and their stances will perhaps lead the governments to change their attitudes. But the divisions are very real. And they worry us. We do not know how long it will take for these wounds to heal.

This is the first time in my life that I have witnessed such a development. The important thing, in my view, is not individuals or governments. They come and go. It is the fate of millions of human beings who are suffering the consequences of the disagreements. And, as far as Iraq is concerned, we are worried about the population.

[Lorieux] I have just come from Kuwait, where your support for Iraq during the Gulf crisis is still strongly criticized. Do you regret having taken those positions?

[Husayn] I did not support Iraq. I opposed the use of force. I did what I could to prevent the wounds which we have seen appear since. I wanted to start an attempt to halt the escalation, to resolve the causes of the crisis, and to prevent what happened. I do not think I was wrong to act in that way.

[Lorieux] The Gulf countries are your neighbors. What lessons have those oil monarchies learned from the earthquake which has shaken their region in the past two years?

[Husayn] It is impossible to talk about it in the past tense. The situation is still changing. I hope that each and every one will learn the lessons of the crisis. We do not yet know what the region will finally be like. The recent developments in the world are clear: We have witnessed the end of dictatorships. We have witnessed the end of the rule of one-party systems. We have seen or are now seeing the end of the rule of armed forces playing a political role. In the same way, we must obviously be able to contemplate the end of autocracies. The message has not yet taken hold of minds in the Near East, except perhaps among the people.

[Lorieux] What are the people waiting for?

[Husayn] They are probably waiting for this change. But, unfortunately, it has not taken place. What can be the future of regimes whose main asset is foreign aid, which will enable them, if they feel threatened, to repress their population—aid with which, in other words, they threaten their people?

Democracy must exist. Human rights must be respected. The people must participate in government. The future depends on it. I hope that the Arab world as a whole will understand that we must move in that direction, that these reforms are vital. And, I hope that it will develop as Europe has, and that the walls of fear, suspicion, and doubt will be brought down so that we can move toward a world which is worth living in. In saying that, I am making myself rather unpopular. I know that. But I am convinced that I am expressing the Arab people's feelings.

[Lorieux] In your speech at the Islamic summit in Dakar, you did not opt for appeasement. You said: "There is a real danger that the Muslims will be described as the enemies of progress and human rights." What should they do to change that impression?

[Husayn] Be authentic Muslims and wake up to the fact that Islam is the continuation of the two other monotheistic religions (Judaism and Christianity—LE FIGARO editor's note), and that Islam requires its followers to be men of progress and compassion. Islam is not a closed or insular religion.

[Lorieux] In Jordan, the Muslim Brotherhood, which holds almost one third of the seats in Parliament, acts on two fronts. On the one hand, it condemns inequalities and dishonest practices in the administration and in some business circles. It also predicts the failure of the Near East peace negotiations. Its arguments are likely to prevail during the coming parliamentary elections in 1993.

[Husayn] Jordan's strength is that people know what is going on there. We are consolidating democracy. It is impossible to forecast the result of the 1993 elections! But we have learned a great deal since the 1988 elections.

Many prominent people with very different opinions (including five members of the Muslim Brotherhood—LE FIGARO editor's note) have held government posts. Defending theories, as those men did before, is one thing. Holding government responsibilities is another. It will be up to the people to judge.

[Lorieux] What about the arguments of the Islamic movement?

[Husayn] We never thought that the peace process would be completed quickly. We will have to struggle long and courageously. The economic situation is very difficult. That is true. Jordan has had to welcome many of its children returning to the country (around 300,000 Jordanian Palestinians expelled from Kuwait last year—LE FIGARO editor's note). I do not think that, faced with a problem half this serious, other countries would have managed as well as we have. I am therefore confident.

[Lorieux] Is playing the democratic game with the Islamic movement not playing with fire? Ali Belhadj, one of the leaders of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front, said in substance that democracy should be used to seize power.

[Husayn] Religion must not be used as a political tool. Nobody can claim to have a monopoly on truth.

[Lorieux] That is what you said to the Jordanian Parliament in early December.

[Husayn] And I will continue to say it. After all, there are both Muslims and Christians in this coountry. Islam is not the property of a small group. It belongs to us all. Using religion in the political sphere is also dangerous because if it fails, religions is blamed. I am opposed to generalizations. Experience will help us to find answers suited to the circumstances.

[Lorieux] Are you not afraid that the Islamic movement might reject the principle of alternation and that, having obtained power in elections, they might refuse to hand it back if the election results went against them?

[Husayn] Let us wait and see first whether the people opt for such a change.

[Lorieux] What conclusions do you draw from the events in Algeria?

[Husayn] I prefer to say nothing. We are watching what happens.

[Lorieux] Jordan is experimenting with democracy. It is surrounded by authoritarian regimes, either monarchies or presidential regimes. You are the "bad example." Surely you are viewed with suspicion?

[Husayn] That is my impression. But we are doing what we think we ought to do.

Afghanistan

Aircraft Downed by Rebellious Troops

BK2901084592 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 28 Jan 92 p 2

[Text] A Kabul regime aircraft was downed by the mutineering militia of the Kabul regime in Baghlan province on Sunday as tension mounted between the militia and the regular army, reports Afghan News Agency [ANA].

It could not be immediately confirmed as to whether the aircraft was downed while bombing the militia strong holds in Baghlan province or it was on regular flight.

Sources of Hezb-e-Eslami and Jamiat-e-Eslami told ANA on Monday that attempts of the regime failed to get the loyalty of the revolting militia.

It is worth mentioning that three militia generals have staged mutiny against the regime forces in northern Afghanistan. They have got control over three provinces including Samangan, Baghlan and Mazar-i-Sharif.

In some parts of Samangan province fighting was continuing between the forces loyal to Najib and the militia. The Salang highway has been closed by the said militiamen.

It could, however, not be ascertained as to whether the militia uprising against the Kabul regime has any linkage or support of the Mojahedin or not.

Wakil Welcomes Pakistan Position on Peace

LD2801180892 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] 'Abdol Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, was asked today by a BAKHTAR journalist about the statement of His Excellency Mohammad Khan Kanju, minister of state for foreign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, regarding Afghanistan. 'Abdol Wakil replied: We consider that yesterday's statement of Mohammad Khan Kanju, minister of state for foreign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, is in compliance with the aim of restoring peace in the Republic of Afghanistan, with the efforts of the international community, especially the United Nations, for a political solution of the situation, with the five-point UN plan, with the 27 January statement of UN Secretary General Butros Ghali, and with the efforts and practical measures taken by the Republic of Afghanistan. We also consider it to be a realistic and positive step toward the normalization of relations between the two countries.

We have always said that the restoration of peace and stability in the Republic of Afghanistan and the normalization of relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan are in the interest of the people of the two countries and the region. Therefore, welcoming yesterday's statement of His Excellency Kanju, we reiterate in response, with full cordiality, our complete readiness for any kind of requisite cooperation in the earnest efforts to reach those noble aims which involve the will, determination, and interests of the people of the two countries.

We are of the opinion that yesterday's stance of the government of Pakistan, which is in harmony with new international developments, especially with the principle of a peaceful solution to regional disputes [words indistinct] will help with the restoration of peace and stability in the Republic of Afghanistan, a political solution to the situation, and the normalization of relations between the two countries.

In order to reach a political solution, ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region, and establish mutual good-neighborly relations between the two Muslim countries, in line with the long-standing wish and demand of our government and people, we are comprehensively ready, as esteemed Najibollah, president of Afghanistan, said in his speech on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the declaration of national reconciliation policy, to respond cordially and with good intentions, to this realistic stance of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with practical, honest, and constructive steps.

Commentary Views Position

LD2701230192 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Commentary by BAKHTAR political correspondent]

[Text] Change in Pakistan's policy on the political solution of the Afghan problem will guarantee the prosp cts of Pakistan's economic, trade, and industrial growth. This view has recently been expressed by Sardar Asif Ali, minister of state for economic affairs of Pakistan, in Islamabad after his three-week visit to Russia and the Central Asian republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. According to reports by international news sources, he stated at a news conference in Islamabad: Pakistan is ready to help build a railway connecting the Central Asian republics with the South-Western shores of Pakistan through Afghanistan. After his three-week visit to the republics of Central Asia, Asif Ali said: The republics of Central Asia favor cooperation with Pakistan. The minister of state for economic affairs of Pakistan added: The support of the Government of Pakistan for the leaders of Afghan groups based in Peshawar is an obstacle to the development of Pakistan's relations with the republics of Central Asia. He named Golbuddin Hekmatyar, a leader of the extremist groups, as the main obstacle in this path, and asserted that leaders of the Central Asian republics do not agree with the policy of Pakistan over the Afghan problem. The rationale of those remarks of a high- ranking official of Pakistan emanates from two facts. First, Pakistan faces a great economic crisis—therefore it needs a market for its

commodities. The best market for the industrial products of Pakistan is the republics of Central Asia. Second, Pakistan must utilize [words indistinct] caused by the peace-seeking policy of Afghanistan to improve Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. A year ago on 15 January 1991, the esteemed Najibollah, president of Afghanistan, declared: The Republic of Afghanistan wants to be an economic partner rather than military rival of the neighboring countries, especially of Pakistan. And on 15 January of this year, he reiterated, referring to the proposal: If groups and neighboring countries take one step, then the Republic of Afghanistan is ready to take three steps toward them. What is the meaning of the Afghan leadership's policy, which emanates from excellent political wisdom, and complies with the national interests of the people of Afghanistan and its neighbors? The meaning is that the Republic of Afghanistan is ready to have good relations and good neighborliness with all of its neighbors, especially with Pakistan. Afghanistan has thus far not created any obstacle to the establishment of good relations with Pakistan. But the Republic of Afghanistan has over the past years been permanently subject to aggression and acts of conspiracy and agitation on the part of Pakistan and its fundamentalist circles. As a result, relations between the two neighboring countries have remained (?bleak). Political leaders, economic experts, and reformist [last word in Dari: tahavoltalab] personalities of Pakistan believe: If Pakistan wants to attain its economic goals and the expansion of political, cultural, and technical relations with Central Asian republics, it is necessary that lasting peace be restored in Afghanistan. And this is possible only through the renunciation of its previous policy about the Afghan problem and for it to approach realistically the problems and realities of Afghanistan. The thought and policy of the fundamentalists have demonstrated over the years of national reconciliation that war and hostility is not the way to the salvation of societies that are backward socioeconomically. On the contrary it destroys the material and morale nucleus of countries. Under such conditions in which the positions of the region's countries such as Iran and Turkey move ahead in the direction of developing political, economic, technical, and cultural relations with Central Asian countries, there are more possibilities than ever for Pakistan to have friendly relations and economic cooperation with Afghanistan, which has historic, ethnic, linguistic, and religious links with it, and with Central Asian countries.

Recent objective political developments and movements show that it is only the fundamentalists who are angry with the change in Pakistan's policy, made in the interest of peace and stability in the region and the country. In particular, the meeting of General Asif Nawaz, Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan, with the former King of Afghanistan, and the retirement of General Hamid Gul, former head of Pakistan's ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence], apparently as signs of changes in Pakistan's policy, have extremely angered fundamentalist forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Golbuddin Hekmatyar even warned: If Pakistan changes its economic policy with Central Asian republics, [words indistinct]. The remarks by Golbuddin and similar remarks by Qazi Husayn Ahmad, head of Pakistan's fundamentalist party Jama'at Eslami, mean that it is only the fundamentalists who do not want good neighborly relations to be established between Afghanistan and its neighbors. Therefore they oppose the improvement of relations between the people of Afghanistan and the neighboring countries. It is up to Pakistan's politicians to bravely go forward with increasing realism in its efforts in the interest of the people of the two neighboring and fraternal countries.

Mojahedin Warn Against Kabul Contacts

LD2701162592 Moscow TASS in English 1522 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Kuzmin]

[Text] Tehran January 27 TASS— The Afghan mojahedin warned the new independent Central Asian states not to have any contacts with the Kabul regime. The present Afghan Government is not "eternal", and after coming to power of "true representatives of the Afghan people", the Central Asian republics will reap the fruits of their short-sighted policies, in an interview with the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI newspaper today, one of the leaders of the Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami (Movement for Islamic Revolution) (MIR), Nasrollah Mansur said.

According to him, after stopping Moscow's help, Najibollah started getting all necessary help, including arms, from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, amd "according to reliable sources", from India as well. Mansur called upon Iran and Pakistan to put pressure on the northern neighbours of Afghanistan to stop collaborating with the Kabul regime.

The MIR leader also dwelled on Saudi Arabia's attempts to take part in solution of the Afghan problem. It is acceptable only in case Riyadh assists in mojahedin unity. As far the U.S.A., Washington's aim is obvious, not to let an independent Islamic government come to power in Kabul. The White House sees for itself a danger in letting the emergence of a powerful state resting on the forces of Islam followers near the Islamic Republic of Iran, which may overcome the armed-to-the-teeth super power.

Mansur did not rule out the possibility of a political solution to the Afghan problem. The path to it lies through a tripartite meeting of Iran, Pakistan and mojahedin or through four-sided negotiations with the participation of Moscow. But in any case mojahedin refuse to have anything to do with Najibollah.

No Settlement While Kabul Regime in Power

PM2801111592 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Jan 92 p 7

[Ahmad al-Khatib report: "Afghan Mujahid Yunis Khales Tells AL-HAYAH: No Peaceful Settlement While Kabul Regime Exists"]

[Excerpt] Peshawar—Shaykh Yunis Khales, leader of one wing of the Afghan Hezb-e Eslami, has said that a peaceful settlement is possible in his country, provided the Najib regime is toppled. In a statement to AL-HAYAH he said that he refused to participate in the Bonn conference on the Afghan issue because of the presence of representatives of the Kabul government in it.

Answering a question about whether the mojahedin were making a move to break the political and military deadlock, he said that "there is a need to work to unite Afghan ranks." He also revealed that he was working with Etehad-e Eslami leader 'Abdol Rasul in this regard to achieve that aim.

As regards Iran's reported establishment of new relations with Kabul, he said that "Iran's policy does not allow the establishment of a Sunni Islamic state next to it. And it wants to create a group for it in Afghanistan. It also wants a weak Afghan government that relies totally on Pakistan and Iran. Iran ostensibly acts as a neighbor, but it really is not working for our jihad's interests." [passage omitted]

Khaleqyar Chairs Council of Ministers Session

LD2801234692 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Excerpts] The prime minister's press office reports that a regular session of the Council of Ministers was held this morning in the prime minister's palace, chaired by esteemed Fazl Haq Khaleqyar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

At the beginning of the session, esteemed Khaleqyar spoke about the political and military situation in the country and told the members of the government about the recent development in the region and the new trends and changes brought about in the policies of neighboring countries to accelerate the political solution to the issue of Afghanistan, based on the five-point UN plan. He described the development in the political solution of the issue of Afghanistan as interesting.

The esteemed prime minister talked about international support for the active and peaceful policy of the Republic of Afghanistan, the consolidation and expansion of political and economic relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and various countries, and about the interest shown by the international community and friendly countries in consolidating, expanding, and continuing economic, technical, cultural, and trade cooperation with our country. He cited examples of such developments.

The esteemed Khaleqyar stressed the need to take additional measures to improve the living conditions and security of personnel in posts located along the highways. [passage omitted]

The esteemed Khaleqyar mentioned the country's economic limitations and problems. He said that delays in the distribution of goods through coupons has caused dissatisfaction among a number of coupon holders. The esteemed Khaleqyar instructed the ministers of commerce, and light industry and foodstuffs to take practical measures to remove the delay caused in the distribution of flour and ghee and to stop the complaints of the coupon holders.

Despite the fact that a series of measures have been taken to supply primary needed goods, the delivery of wheat from the Republic of Kazakhstan and wheat purchased from abroad by private entrepreneurs is slow. The esteemed Khaleqyar instructed the commerce minister to accelerate the delivery and transportation of wheat and other primary, needed goods through contacts and negotiations with importers and relevant sources.

The esteemed prime minister, noting complaints about the distribution of electric power, said that it has not been carried out justly. People complain and are dissatisfied with it. He instructed the minister of water and power to strictly assess the matter and control power distribution through power stations and pylons. [passage omitted]

The esteemed Khaleqyar stressed the organization and acceleration of the distribution of fuel to the armed forces according to the established mechanisms, and instructed the commerce ministry to increase the quantity of fuel distributed to armed forces personnel.

The esteemed prime minister expressed satisfaction with measures which have been executed by some ministries to realize savings as instructed previously by the high session of ministers in order to improve the budget situation and alleviate the country's financial problems. He asked some other ministers to review the expenses of their related organizations and pay more attention to this issue. Esteemed Khaleqyar noted: Effective and serious measures are underway regarding the mining of oil and gas. Contacts have been made with some foreign companies to ensure that the exploitation in northern areas of oil and gas for home consumption starts very soon.

The esteemed Khaleqyar told members of the government that talks have been conducted by delegations of Afghanistan and the Republic of Tajikistan on natural gas exports to the Republic of Tajikistan on the basis of international prices, taking into account the quality of the country's natural gas. According to signed protocols, an agreement on the export of Afghan natural gas to Tajikistan will be signed by the two republics in the near future.

Expressing satisfaction with the increase in the transportation of commodities by the private sector, the esteemed prime minister said: Over the past two weeks, 700 truckloads of food and more than 600,000 heads of livestock have arrived in Kabul.

Esteemed Khaleqyar said that high school dropouts and university graduates, who are referred to ministries by the ministry of work and social affairs, complain about not being appointed. He instructed ministries and

administrations to take serious steps to address the employment of referred graduates.

According to the agenda, the minsters also heard the report of Mohammad Anwar Dust, minister of light industry and foodstuffs, on the status of the Cotton Gin and Press Corporation. They approved the ministry's proposal to increase the price of cotton seed, and decided that facilities should be made availible for the purchase of cotton in order to support and encourage cotton growers, and raise the level of cotton production in the country. According to the proposal, there will a considerable increase in the distribution of chemical fertilizers and the price of cotton.

The ministers' session decided that the price of one tonne of cotton of the Gin and Press Corporation of the Ministry of Light Industry and Foodstuffs will be raised to 13,000 to 18,000 afghanis. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Commander Meets Burmese Counterpart on Refugees

BK2801132192 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1230 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] The unabated influx of Rohingya [Burmese Muslim] refugees to Bangladesh and the Myanmar troops built up in the bordering Arakan state was discussed at the first flag meeting at Maungdaw Tuesday [28 January] between the sector commanders of Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Bangladesh side was represented at the talks by the Chittagong BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] sector commander, Colonel Ali Hasan, and the Myanmar side was led by chief of the Arakanese provincial security forces.

India

CIA Director's Remarks on Nuclear Program Denied

BK2801160592 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] New Delhi has refuted certain observations made recently by the CIA director, Mr. Robert Gates, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. The spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry reiterated that India's nuclear program is aimed at developing atomic energy for peaceful purposes. Putting the record straight on the issues raised by Mr. Gates, the spokesman said India neither possesses nuclear weapons nor has a chemical weapons program. He said India is the first country to sign the 1925 Geneva protocol on the non-use of chemical weapons. [sentence as heard] He said India has banned the export of chemicals and pointed out that New Delhi has repeatedly asked Pakistan to sign a bilateral agreement to ban the development, production, and use of chemical weapons.

The spokesman said India's missile development program is indigenous and is not dependent on other countries. He clarified that India has not transferred or sold any of its technologies despite requests to do so.

About Mr. Gates' apprehension that India will utilize the services of scientists from the Commonwealth of Independent States, the spokesman said India has adequate scientific manpower for its needs and has no intention to invite outsiders.

Government Asks Burma To Ensure Refugees' Return

BK2801170092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] India has urged Myanmar [Burma] to take immediate steps for the return of over 950 Burmese nationals who have crossed over to Nagaland. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry told newsmen in New Delhi today that these people are staying in the districts of Mon and Tuensang. He said the Myanmar-based insurgent groups had reportedly taken harsh action against the villagers, resulting in the exodus. The matter was taken up by the Indian ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. M.S. Malik, with the foreign minister, Mr. Ohn Gyaw. The Myanmar minister acknowledged that the exodus had taken place and assured his government's cooperation in the early return of the villagers. The Nagaland government will give temporary permits for 15-day stay to refugees from Myanmar. The Indian Red Cross Society has announced a cash relief of one lakh rupees for the refugees.

Commentary Supports Permanent UN Membership

BK2801113792 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 28 Jan 92

[D. Sen Commentary]

[Text] The United States senator, Mr. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, on a visit to this country expressed the view earlier this month that India should be made a permanent member of the UN. He was not being just courteous. What he said is a substantial suggestion and if it in any way reflects a majority American view, it would indicate a welcome change of position. A few months ago, the U.S. position seemed different on an enhanced status to India in the world body. This was clear when the U.S. ambassador at the UN, Mr. Pickering, said on a visit to New Delhi that he did not think it was necessary to change the present arrangement at the UN. He dwelt at great length on the need for making the UN an effective body, especially after the success of the U.S.-led multi-nation operation to vacate Iraqi aggression on Kuwait. Mr. Pickering then was in favor of giving to the UN more teeth without making any structural changes in it. He obviously reflected the Republican Bush administration's views. Whether Democratic Senator Moynihan expressed in New Delhi his personal or his party's views, or whether he represented a change in Washington's

stand is not clear. But there is little doubt that he has raised an issue that merits serious consideration.

The world has immensely changed since the demise of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of the cold war. A measure of the sea-change was Moscow's full endorsement of the U.S.-sponsored move at the UN to organize global action against Iraq. Indeed, so complete was American influence at work that eyebrows were raised in many countries at the description of the anti-Iraq resolutions in New York as those of the UN. Since the U.S. domination was pervasive, it had to be a matter of time before serious minds would begin to think of restoring the credibility of the UN as a world body. When once the world was delicately balanced between two superpowers, the UN had lost much of its effectiveness. Some cynical observers would have even described the world body as a biggest industry in humbug. But in the new world order that President Bush has talked about, the UN needs to be restored to full health so that it can function in a unipolar world as an acceptable arbiter between individual and groups of nations.

No serious efforts to achi ve such an objective will be successful unless they begin where they should, namely by making the UN more representative of the present day world. The world's major powers showed perfect pragmatism when they accepted the Russian Republic's claim to inherent the Soviet Union's status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. A similar degree of readiness to accept the new realities should inform the UN members. [sentence as heard] India's claim for permanent status is supported by weighty arguments. This country accounts for one-seventh of the human family and thus enjoys a measure of influence among developing countries. If it was not considered for permanent membership of the Security Council when the UN was established in 1945, it was because India was then still under part of the British colony. In size and demographic strength and in comparable levels of economic development, China was in no superior position than India, and yet China's claim was accepted when the UN was formed and it was not grudged when it was readmitted into the world body after U.S. objections were withdrawn in late 1960s.

India's claim to a permanent status is not the only matter relevant to making the UN more representative of the world of today. Other serious issues are the claims of Germany and Japan. They were vanquished in the second world war, and were designated enemy nations. Today, these two countries are the major ingredients of world development. Their political influence is steadily growing, commensurate with their economic might. Their claim to permanent membership status is at least as strong as that of Britain and France. It is hoped that Mr. Moynihan's proposal for India would lead to a global debate on the pattern of restructuring of the UN. It will be fallacy to suppose that acceptance of the proposal as also that for Germany and Japan would open the Pandora's box. Nothing of that kind will happen for the simple reason that every country realistically will not stake its claim for similar status. If a new case is convincing, it should be considered without reservations. After all, there is nothing sacrosanct about the number of permanent members of the UN. The present five is as reasonable and realistic as a future 10 might be.

Iran

German Minister Arrives; Hostage Release Possible

NC2901114492 Paris AFP in English 1050 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Tehran, Jan 29 (AFP)—German Justice Minister Klaus Kinkel arrived here late Tuesday for talks with Iranian officials amid reports that conditions were ripe for the release of two German hostages held in Lebanon by a pro-Iranian group.

Reliable sources in Tehran said Kinkel will be having talks with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his Iranian counterpart Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi during his three-day stay.

They did not reveal the nature of the talks but reliable sources in Bonn said Kinkel was likely to press for Iranian support for the release of the German aid workers—the last two Westerners to be held in Lebanon.

His visit also comes amid reports from Lebanon that conditions for two Lebanese Muslim Shiite brothers imprisoned in Germany on charges of terrorism had "significantly improved" which could help in efforts to release the two German aid workers held in Lebanon.

A source familiar with the hostage negotiations said last week that the kidnappers of Heinrich Struebig and Thomas Kemptner, abducted in 1989, would now be prepared to release them if Bonn agreed to reduce the sentences of 'Ali and Muhammad Hammadi, convicted on terrorist charges.

The Germans are believed to be held by members of the pro-Iranian Hammadi family.

Iran's ambassador to Bonn, Hoseyn Musaviyan, said last August that the Hammadi clan was prepared to a swap.

Ministry Protests Turkish TV's 'Anti-Iran' Film

LD2801205992 Tehran IRNA in English 1833 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 28, (IRNA)—The Turkish ambassador to Tehran, Korkmaz Haktanir, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry today to hear Iran's strongly worded protest against the screening of the anti-Iran feature film by the state-run Turkish television last Saturday night.

Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs, Alaeddin Boroujerdi told the Turkish envoy that there are indications that such developments are usually

designed and engineered by the United States and Israel to arrest the getting closer of Muslim nations.

According to Haktanir the said film does not reflect the feelings of the Turkish Government towards Iran.

He said Turkey is bent on maintaining good neighbourly relations with Iran, and expressed hope that such things would not be any more experienced in the relations between the two neighbouring countries.

Produced in the United States starring fugitive pre-revolution Iranian movie stars, the film insults the Islamic revolution and its values. Its screening by the state-run Turkish TV has drawn sharp criticism from the Iranian press.

Ministry Denies Hiring Soviet Nuclear Scientists

LD2901111892 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] A Foreign Ministry spokesman refuted the baseless reports of some Western mass media and espionage centers that Iran has employed nuclear experts from the former Soviet Union.

He said: Such propaganda, spread with the coordination of Zionist circles, is an attempt to conceal the Zionist regime's extensive activities in nuclear arms proliferation and storage and in gaining greater access to the weapons of mass destruction. The Foreign Ministry spokesman concluded: Iran is one of the first signatories to the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, is one of 40 members of the disarmament commission, and has always demonstrated that it is committed to its undertakings.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Calls for Ties With Gulf States

LD2801111692 Tehran IRNA in English 1004 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 28, IRNA—"The Islamic Republic of Iran, employing all her potentials, is ready to assist Muslim countries specially those in the region," said President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Tuesday.

The president made the remark in a meeting with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Iranian ambassadors in the Persian Gulf states.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani underlined Iran's policy based on expansion of relations with her neighbouring countries, especially those in the Persian Gulf region.

"Global enemies of Muslim countries are constantly attempting to hinder the process of expansion of relations between Iran and the Persian Gulf states by raising doubts," the president noted.

He also pointed to the achievements so far gained in promotion of ties between Iran and the regional countries.

Meanwhile, Velayati briefed the president on the ongoing 4-day seminar on the Persian Gulf region, opened here Monday.

Reportage on Visit of Yemeni Planning Minister

Asks To Purchase Oil

LD2601134692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] During the first round of discussions of the Iran-Yemen joint economic commission held this morning in the presence of our country's construction jihad minister and the Yemeni minister of planning and development, the expansion of cultural and economic cooperations was reviewed.

During that meeting, Mr. Foruzesh, minister of construction jihad, announced a readiness for the transfer of the Islamic Republic of Iran's experience in the field of rural development. The two countries' cooperation in the fields of agriculture, fishing, oil, medicine, research, the establishment of a shipping line, the creation of research centers, and the establishment of a medical clinic in Yemen were among the subjects examined during the first round of discussions of the Iran-Yemen joint session.

During that session Mr. Faraj Ghanim, Yemeni minister of planning and development, welcomed the proposal of our country's minister of construction jihad about the expansion of cultural, economic, and development cooperation between the two countries. He also made the request to purchase oil from Iran and called for the expansion of the two countries' cooperation in the oil and technical fields.

Seeks Iranian Economic Expertise

LD2601135492 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] Mr. Ghanim, Yemeni planning and development minister, in a meeting this afternoon with Mr. Roghani-Zanjani, the vice president and director of the Plan and Budget Organization, said: Following the the unity of the North and South of the country, the Yemeni Government has embarked on planning for the purpose of reconstruction and reforming economic, political, and administrative structures of the state, and it is eager to make use of the Islamic Republic of Iran's valuable experiences.

During the meeting Mr. Roghani-Zanjani declared Iran's readiness to offer Yemen technical aid in the fields of agriculture, dam construction, oil production, and the purchase of required goods, as well as to send groups of experts to that country to impart experience in the economic and planning fields.

Meets With Velayati

LD2601140892 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] In his meeting today with Foreign Minister Velayati, the Yemeni minister of planning and development, who is currently in Tehran, announced his country's readiness and eagerness to expand and deepen relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mr. Faraj Ghanim also pointed to the interference of arrogant countries in the internal affairs of other countries and said: The Westerners always regard democracy from their own point of view and want democracy for their aims. He emphasized: No rule or party will remain in power except through reliance on the people.

Foreign Minister Velayati welcomed the expansion of ties with Yemen and said: Westerners come on the scene under the slogan of the defense of democracy to confront Islamic and Third World countries. This is a trick. Fortunately, such a confrontation is now clear to the people.

[Tehran IRNA in English at 1302 GMT on 26 January, in a similar report on the meeting, states: "Velayati welcomed expansion of Iran-Yemen bilateral relations. Turning to the West's attitude towards the Muslim and Third World countries, he condemned Western governments for their interferences in the internal affairs of other countries and for pretending to advocate democracy. 'The Westerners counter the Islamic and Third World countries under the cover of support for democracy but as soon as a nation holds a free election whose outcome is not favored by them, they are unmasked and it becomes evident that they are not advocates of human rights and freedom of expression but want to preserve their own interests,' Velayati said. However, he said, the nations were no longer deceived by such deceitful attitudes."]

Received by Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD2801225792 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Faraj Ghanim, Yemeni minister of planning and development, this afternoon. At the meeting, and in referring to the successful meeting of the first session of the two countries' joint economic commission, the Yemeni minister of planning and development offered a report on his talks with the officials of our country during the aforementioned session. He then said: Positive talks encourage us to willingly take further steps to expand and strengthen brotherly ties with Iran.

Expressing his happiness at the unity of the two Yemens, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani then said: The growing trend of bilateral cooperation as well as the successful meeting of the joint commission between the two countries underline the existence of suitable ground for strengthening ties between Iran and Yemen. The president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, emphasizing the need for greater cooperation between the two countries in all fields of mutual interest, said: We are prepared, within means, to aid the expansion of ties between the two countries; we welcome this.

[Tehran IRNA in English at 1740 GMT on 28 January in a Tehran-datelined report notes: "President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani today voiced Iran's readiness to expand bilateral ties with the Yemen Arab Republic. He made the remarks in a meeting with the visiting Yemeni Minister of Planning and Development Faraj Ghanim. Rafsanjani expressed satisfaction over the unity of the two Yemens and said that the successful meetings of the joint Iran-Yemen trade commission show the existence of appropriate grounds for consolidation of mutual ties. Ghanim who is in Tehran since last week called the meetings of the joint commission as successful adding that the positive talks held so far encouraged his country to follow up the issue more enthusiastically.

"In a separate meeting with Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad Khatami today, Ghanim inked an agreement on culture, artistic, and tourism cooperation. Khatami said in the meeting that Iran and Yemen can have good cooperation in view of their rich Islamic culture and on the basis of non-interference in each other's internal affairs and mutual respect."]

[Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian at 2030 GMT on 28 January provides the following information on the Iranian-Yemeni cultural agreement: "The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Yemen signed an agreement for expanding cooperation in culture, art, news, and tourism. The aforementioned agreement was signed in a meeting in Tehran on Tuesday between Mr. Ghanim, Yemeni minister of planning and development, and Mr. Khatami, minister of Islamic culture and guidance. At the time of signing of the Iranian-Yemeni agreement on cultural, art, news, and tourism, Mr. Khatami said that the two Muslim nations of Iran and Yemen are able to establish good cooperation, with due regard to their rich Islamic culture and observing the principle of mnutual respect. Yemen's minister of planning and development meanwhile said that meetings and agreements between the Iranian and Yemeni officials will stabilize the two countries' cooperation in the cultural, art, and economic fields."]

Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif Arrives, Meets Officials

BK2801160192 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, who left for Switzerland this morning, made an unscheduled brief stopover in Tehran this afternoon due to technical reasons. During the stopover, he held talks with Iranian leaders which covered Pakistani-Iranian relations, the political settlement in Afghanistan, Kashmir, and a just political and economic world order.

Iranian First Vice President Hasan Habibi, Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, and high officials represented Iran in the talks. Sartaj Aziz, finance minister; Malik Mohammad Naim, commerce minister; Chaudhary Shujat Hussain, interior minister; Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, minister of state for foreign affairs; Akram Zaki, secretary general of foreign affairs; Shaharyar Mohammad Khan, foreign secretary; and Shamshad Ahmad, Pakistani ambassador to Iran, assisted the prime minister in the talks.

Akram Zaki told ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN after the talks that many issues were discussed, including Kashmir, where the people have launched a movement for their freedom. The Afghanistan problem and proposals to solve it were also discussed. The prime minister briefed the Iranian leaders about Pakistan's policy, announced yesterday, which emphasizes that Pakistan fully supports the UN's five-point plan to solve the Afghanistan problem.

Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif told the Iranian leaders that bright opportunities exist for Pakistan and Iran to work together for their mutual benefit and to play a common role in the industrial and economic progress of the Central Asian republics.

Mohammad Nawaz Sharif also discussed with the Iranian leaders matters relating to the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO] summit which will be held in Tehran on 16-17 February. He also exchanged views on the proposed ministerial meeting to be held in Turkey to prepare for the ECO summit. Both sides emphasized that a balanced world order should be established to protect the rights of both small and big countries.

The talks also covered Pakistani-U.S. and Iranian-U.S. relations.

The prime minister's special plane made an unscheduled landing at Tehran because one of the plane's four engines was suspected to have developed some trouble. The prime minister was on his way to Switzerland to represent Pakistan at the World Economic Forum.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ala-ed-Din Borujerdi welcomed Mohammad Nawaz Sharif. Later, First Vice President Hasan Habibi, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, and high officials reached the airport to receive the prime minister. The prime minister was later scheduled to leave Tehran for Switzerland by a special plane provided by the Iranian Government.

Khamene'i, ICRC Head Examine POW Issue

LD2701201292 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] In response to a letter from the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, described the return of POW's to their families' embrace as a partial compensation for the damage inflicted by the ruinous war. ICRC President Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga had written a letter to the eminent leader saying: In view of the spiritual position of your eminent self, who holds a special position not only in the Islamic Republic of Iran but also throughout the entire Islamic world, I have allowed myself to plead for your eminence's time in connection with a humanitarian issue which I consider to be of fundamental and great importance.

The people of Iran, in the course of eight years of war, suffered many hardships. A war which ruined villages and towns plunged numerous families into mourning and inflicted on many people the sorrow of not knowing what had become of their dear ones.

Continuing his letter, he asks Ayatollah Khamene'i to pursue the question of the fate of Iranian and Iraqi soldiers who are missing in action, and he also expresses the hope that the ICRC can find suitable answers to give to the numerous families who are anxious about the fate of their lost ones. In conclusion, Mr. Sommaruga says: For this reason, I extend a plea of assistance to your eminence so that by using your influence with the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, all the Iraqi POW's who, in interviews with Red Cross representatives, expressed the wish to return to their country are allowed to return to Iraq.

In reply to the letter of ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga which was conveyed to him by means of the Islamic Republic of Iran's permanent representative office at the United Nations in Geneva, his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the revolution, graciously said: In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I appreciate your sentiments in connection with POW's. We, too, wish for the POW's of this ruinous war to return to the embrace of their families as soon as possible so that the damage inflicted by the war can thereby be partially relieved. Perhaps you believe, as we do, that a considerable number of captured Iranian combatants are still being kept in detention in Iraq.

One of our responsibilities is to keep alive the hope of the families of those poor innocents, even the names of whom Iraq has not allowed to be published anywhere. In our view, the most fruitful approach is for you to use your resources to at least obtain a list of the names of those missing people. Undoubtedly this will be of great help in making it possible for Iranian and Iraqi POW's to be released. May God grant success to you and all people of goodwill.

Commentary Criticizes 'Disappointing' French Policy

NC2601195592 Tehran SALAM in Persian 5 Jan 92 p 12

[Unattributed commentary: "Paris' Political Suicide"]

[Excerpts] The crisis that began with the arrest of an Iranian Embassy employee in Bern has cast a shadow on Iranian-Swiss relations. The Swiss Government has,

however, named France as the source of this adventurism. It will not be long, then, before the consequences of this act will greatly affect relations between Iran and France, which had been expanding.

Based on their experience with postrevolutionary Iran, the French, who may be more aware than anyone else that the accusations against our embassy in Switzerland are groundless, should have no doubt that the Islamic Republic of Iran will not remain silent about accusations leveled against one of its innocent citizens serving the government. The signals sent to Paris to date should be very clear.

The truth is that France's behavior toward Iran since the victory of the Islamic revolution has been very disappointing. [passage omitted]

How is it that despite all the political ties that Iran's counterrevolution abroad has with the United States and despite the interests that U.S. policies have in the Iranian counterrevolution these groups are based in France? This demonstrates that the French do not have the necessary maturity to prove and implement the allegations that they are making on the world level and in Europe.

After the resolution of the financial disputes with France, Iran expressed its readiness to expand relations. As France has experienced, however, this does not mean that Iran is ready to expand its relations at any cost. Some nations are waiting for a new crisis in Iranian-French relations. It is not very difficult for other countries to compete with France in the various scientific and technological fields. Even if France's political interests in Europe and the current situation of old friends such as Iraq in the Middle East are taken into consideration, does the path that Paris has chosen not lead to its political suicide?

Habibi Details Exchange Rates, Foreign Policy

LD2701235192 Tehran IRNA in English 1009 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 27, IRNA—First Vice President Hasan Habibi said here Monday that existence of several exchange rates for foreign currencies in the country is not in the interest of the economy and the government plans to introduce a single rate. Habibi who was speaking at his weekly press conference as the government spokesman added no decision has yet been made on eliminating the going multiple exchange rates in the next Iranian year, to start March 21, 1992. "Furthermore, no talks have been held on exchange rate of foreign currencies and devaluing the rial."

Introduction of a single rate will remove the probable misuses and it is better to reduce the going three rates, competitive, floating and official, to two or one, he said.

On the last Tuesday approval of the Resolution 731 by the U.N. Security Council and its conformity with international laws, Habibi said the issue should be investigated by an impartial international committee which is less hostile to Libya. He said this was reiterated in meetings of the visiting Libyan member of the Revolutionary Command 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and other Iranian officials. Habibi termed government investments in the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union as a 'balanced policy.' Iran enjoys traditional relations with these republics and now cultural, political and economic relations must be broadened.

As for restrictions on exports of German-made commodities to Iran, he said that this only applied to specific military items. He added that news agencies through such reports intended to disturb Tehran-Bonn relations. Turning to shortage of kerosene, he said that the public has suffered and the Oil Ministry must apologize to the nation. He said the shortage is mainly due to transportation problems.

Majles Debates Amendments to Budget Bill

LD2701215992 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Excerpt] In the continuation of the debate on the 1371 [1992-93] budget bill at today's Majles open session, which was chaired by Mr. Karrubi, proposals for amendments and additions by Majles deputies and committees on notes 26, 27, and 28 were debated, and some were ratified.

According to our correspondent's report, under note 26, to provide the necessary financial resources for foreign and domestic currency expenditures to aquire the required oil by-products and import them, the Oil Ministry is permitted to export 279,000 barrels of oil per day via the Iranian national oil company, and transfer the foreign currency revenues to the Central Bank's account.

According to the note, which is subject to note 2 of the act, banking facilities to the tune of $100 billion will be placed at the disposal of the Iranian national gas company to carry out gas supply operations to homes.

Under note 27, the national gas company is to give special priority to supplying gas to cold provinces. [passage omitted]

Determines Oil, Gas Export Revenues

LD2701232692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Excerpts] The Majles has set the foreign exchange revenue from oil, gas, and petroleum products exports for the next year [starting 21 March 1992] at $19.790 billion.

At this afternoon's open session of the Majles, chaired by Mr. Karrubi, the amendment proposals of the deputies regarding note 29 of the bill were debated and some of these amendments were passed. According to one of the supplementary clauses of that note, at least 1 percent of the foreign exchange portion of the economic apparatus will be allocated to the cooperative sector. Also, on the basis of note 29, in order to utilize domestic production resources and the possibility of transferring technology and technical know-how as well as the provision of surplus value, all economic apparatuses and affiliated companies are duty bound to implement their projects with maximum savings on foreign exchange by employing domestic contractors in the event that the implementation of these projects does not require foreign tariffs, or that they are guaranteed by a company composed of domestic and foreign manufacturers, either on an individual or collective basis. The implementation of projects by foreign contractors should be done by including cases of domestic manufacture in the text of contracts. [passage omitted]

According to our correspondent, the Majles held its third open session for today from 1830 to examine the proposals of the deputies regarding note 29.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepali Congress Nominates Party President

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[Text] Kathmandu, Jan 28 (AFP)—The ruling Nepali Congress (NC) has avoided a potentially disastrous split by unanimously nominating Krishna Prasad Bhattarai as the next party president, party sources said Tuesday. They said the party's central working committee chose Bhattarai in a closed-door meeting Monday night in Jhapa, 390 kilometres (242 miles) southeast of here.

Bhattarai, the acting party president, will seek election by party delegates at a February 11-13 national convention in Jhapa, they said.

Before the committee meeting, the party was badly divided by a feud between its three top leaders—Bhattarai, supreme leader Ganesh Man Singh and Prime Minister G.P. Koirala—over Koirala's plan to seek the party presidency. Many party members saw Koirala's bid as an attempt "to rule the Nepali Congress government without interference from other party leaders," one party source said.

In a compromise, trusted Koirala aide Shushil Koirala, a member of the House of Representatives, received the committee's support to become the next party secretary general and will be nominated by Bhattarai at the February convention, a party official said.

More than 4,000 delegates are expected at the convention, the first national meeting of the Nepali Congress since the late 1950s. Party strategy for April's local council elections will be high on the agenda.

The party sources said the resolution of the split between the party's three top leaders, who had fought together for three decades to overturn the former partyless panchayat system and bring full democracy to Nepal, would give a boost to party members and should help the NC in the local elections and in two by-elections for two constituencies at the national level. The by-elections are to be held February 9.

Political observers said Nepali King Birendra's controversial interview with a local newspaper earlier this month, in which he said the lack of unity among the country's leaders threatened Nepal's still fledgling democracy, had helped spur them to a consensus.

"The unanimous decision of the ruling NC dealt a serious blow to the revivalists and anti-democratic reactionary elements who were dreaming of staging a comeback in the event of a split in the ruling party," one political analyst said. "It came as a great relief to those who wished to see democracy take deep root in the country."